



REPORT

OF THE

HIGH LEVEL MEETING

TO INITIATE THE

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

18 - 25 FEBRUARY 1981

BMICH, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

part one

R E P O R T

OF THE

MEETING OF MINISTERS

OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES

TO INITIATE THE

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

(S A C E P)

23-25 FEBRUARY 1981

BMICH, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES
TO INITIATE THE
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)

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I. Introduction

At the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting held in Bangalore, India, 10-15 March 1980, it was agreed:

- (i) to establish SACEP (South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme);
- (ii) to accept the offer of the Sri Lanka delegation to provide facilities for the Secretariat of the Co-ordinating Committee; and
- (iii) that all countries of South Asia region would extend their help.

The Meeting identified the broad areas in which co-operation was urgently necessary and possible and the different countries which agreed to be focal points in those areas.

It was also agreed that there should be a high level meeting of government officials to work out the articles of association, programme, modalities and functions of each focal point and of the Co-ordinating Committee and that such a meeting of officials might be followed by a high level meeting that would adopt a declaration or convention.

In pursuance of these decisions, a High Level Meeting of Officials to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was convened in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 18-21 February 1981. The Meeting of Ministers of South Asian countries hereby convened has received the report of the High Level Officials' Meeting, including a Draft Declaration on Establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), and Articles of Association, done by, and attached to the Report of, the High Level Officials' Meeting.

2. Attendance and organisation of work

Attendance

The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following member countries, viz. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Nepal, which had confirmed attendance, could not participate due to technical delays.

A representative from Sweden also attended as an observer.

Representatives from the following United Nations agencies and bodies participated: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), ESCAP/Regional Centre for Technology Transfer (RCTT), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO). The World Tourism Organization (WTO) also participated.

A representative from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) attended as an observer.

The list of participants is given at Appendix I.

Messages were received from the following who were unable to attend, conveying their interest and desire to be kept informed: Mr. J.B.P. Maramba, Executive Secretary of ESCAP; the World Bank; Norway; Australia; the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development; and the Bellerive Foundation. In view of the fact that a full delegation was unable to attend, a message was sent also by Iran, expressing full support and wishing the meeting all success.

Election of officers

The Meeting elected Hon. Lalith Athulathmudali, Leader of the Sri Lanka delegation as President ^{*}/ and Hon. (Dr.) R.A. Ghani, Leader of the Bangladesh delegation as Vice-President; and Dr. Abdul Samad Abdullah of Maldives was elected as Rapporteur.

/Credentials

^{*}/ With Hon. Gamini Dissanayake and Hon. Festus Perera presiding on 24 and 25 February 1981, respectively.

Credentials

As agreed, the credentials of the delegations were examined by an *Ad hoc* Committee consisting of the President and Vice-President of the Meeting and declared to be in order.

3. Adoption of agenda

The agenda as adopted is attached at Appendix II.

4. Inauguration

(a) Inaugural address

The Meeting was inaugurated by His Excellency the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Honourable Ranasingha Premadasa. In his address, he stated that the presence of the Ministers and representatives of so many countries reflected the interest of the Governments and people of the South Asia region in the protection and management of the environment and the need to work together to improve their quality of life. All South Asian countries are in need of economic and social development. Paradoxically, these efforts resulted in degradation of the environment. At no time in human history, was the need for remedial action so urgent or insistent. Both in the developing world and the developed world, the value of the quality of life had come to the forefront. But little progress had been made. The problems were also related to the process of 'modernization'. It was in this context that he welcomed the formation of SACEP, which will provide a basis for a joint effort at regional level. The first objective of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme should be the integration of environment concerns with economic goals and policies. Equally important was the need to stimulate a continuing effort in individual countries in the region to adopt environmentally sound projects, programmes and policies. Finally, long-term perspectives and strategies and the formulation of practical examples which would make valid such perspectives was worth-pursuing. The text of the Prime Minister's address is at Appendix III.

/(b)

(b) Message from UNEP Executive Director

A special message from Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), who was unable to attend due to unavoidable circumstances, was read. In his message, after expressing his regret that unavoidable reasons prevented him from being present in person, he recalled his warm association with the countries who had assembled to form SACEP, which was an initiative of undisputable significance not only for themselves but for the world community, UNEP and the United Nations. He said that the element of self-help and the self-financing component built into SACEP was noteworthy and are examples to the others. He wished SACEP God speed and all success and prosperity in their endeavour. The full text of his address is at Appendix IV.

(c) Address by the Director Regional Office and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, UNEP

Mr. C. Suriyakumaran, Director Regional Office and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, UNEP, in his opening address thanked the Prime Minister for inaugurating this Meeting and for the inspiration and guidance he had provided. He briefly traced the developments leading to the Meeting of Ministers, viz. the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting in Bangalore, March 1980, and the High Level Meeting of the Officials which was held in Colombo last week, whose report was before them, together with a draft declaration to be considered for adoption at this Meeting. He stressed that, apart from the importance of co-operative effort for solving environmental problems, the formation of SACEP was important as a pioneering venture in co-operation itself. He said that indications had been received from certain quarters of support and assistance to SACEP and assured fullest support and co-operation from UNEP. The full text of his address is at Appendix V.

5. Statements by Heads of Delegations

Statements were made by heads of delegations at policy level on the status and prospects of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. They described the birth of SACEP as a historic and momentous event in the history of South Asian countries and affirmed their firm belief that this programme would also help their countries to benefit from the experiences and lessons of each other and to promote the cause of environment and development. It is through co-operation and mutual support that the problems could be resolved. A suggestion was also made that an Environment Security Plan for the region may be prepared, in the context of need for a just and improved environment order.

Full texts of statements by heads of delegations are at Appendix VI.

A statement was also made by the representative of the Asian Development Bank conveying the Bank's interest in the proposed activities of SACEP and explaining the Bank's approach for consideration of environmental aspects of projects financing.

6. Declaration on Establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

As a principal action, the Meeting considered the Draft Declaration on Establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme prepared by their Officials at their preceding Session. Taking note of the importance of such a Declaration and the consideration given to all aspects of it by their Officials, the Meeting after full discussion unanimously adopted the Declaration as the Colombo Declaration on the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. The Declaration is given at Appendix VII.

The Meeting also considered and approved the Articles of Association of SACEP. The text of the Articles of Association is at Appendix VIII.

7. Other matters

Secretariat: Director and staff

The principle was accepted that the Director would be appointed in rotation, from countries in alphabetical order, subject to starting with the host country, Sri Lanka. The appointment would be for a period of three years. In the case of the first one, the term would include the period of tenure of the *pro tem* Director.

Regarding the other international staff they would be recruited as provided in rules and regulations, which may be framed by the Consultative Committee and on the recommendation of the Director.

The representative of Sri Lanka announced the appointment of a *pro tem* Director and introduced the candidate, Dr. Leslie Herath, Chairman of the Water Resources Board to the Meeting.

For purposes of appointing a regular Director, a note setting out the type of background, experience and other broad criteria would be prepared by the SACEP Secretariat and circulated. The country from which the Director was chosen would, in nominating the candidate, furnish his background data, which would be circulated. The Director will be appointed by circulation by the Governing Council. The first regular Director shall be appointed as soon as possible, preferably within three months and within a maximum period of six months from the date of appointment of the *pro tem* Director.

Financial contributions

It was noted that Sri Lanka would begin to make its contribution to SACEP Secretariat under the suggested provisions as made in background paper UNEP/SACEP/HLM/HP/III, made available to the Officials' Meeting. It was agreed that all countries accept the principles of giving contributory support to SACEP Secretariat and would announce and make contributions as decided upon by their Governments as soon as possible. Such contributions may be without prejudice to the formula for contributions that may be accepted in due course by the Governing Council.

/Focal points

Focal points

At the request of the representative of Afghanistan, the Meeting agreed that Afghanistan may be the Focal Point for Social Forestry. The representative of India stated that despite this change India would still welcome persons from other member countries to study its large social forestry programmes.

It was also agreed that if in future further requests for being given responsibility as focal points for new areas arose, the same may be accepted.

Collection of information

Attention of the Meeting was called to the request made in document UNEP/SACEP/HLM/BP/II circulated at the Officials' Meeting, for furnishing completed information on the status of activities in the various subject areas. The Meeting agreed that such information would be furnished to SACEP Secretariat as soon as possible.

Report of the Officials' Meeting

The Meeting agreed that the Report of the Meeting of Officials be attached to this Report as its Second Part.

8. Adoption of report and closure of meeting

The Report of the Meeting was adopted on 25 February 1981.

Members of the Meeting unanimously endorsed the importance of the occasion, reiterating their appreciation to all those concerned with the organization of the Meeting and conveying a warm vote of thanks to the host Government, and the office bearers, as well as to UNEP. The Meeting was declared closed on 25 February 1981.

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APPENDIX I

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME:
SECRETARIAT

High Level Meeting to Initiate the
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

18-25 February 1981
Colombo, Sri Lanka

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

(Ministers' Meeting, 23-25 February 1981)

SACEP MEMBERS

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. Esmathulla Walli, Director (Country & Town Planning), State
Committee of Planning

BANGLADESH

Hon. (Dr.) R.A. Ghani, Minister of State for Science and Technology
(Leader)

Mrs. Tahmina Khan, High Commissioner, Bangladesh High Commission in
Sri Lanka

Mr. M.A. Karim, Director, Environment Pollution Control Department

Dr. Mahfuzul Haq, Chairman, Energy and Resources Committee

Mr. Toufic Ali, Counsellor, Bangladesh High Commission in Sri Lanka

INDIA

Hon. C.P.N. Singh, Minister of State for Science and Technology (Leader)

Mr. N.D. Jayal, Joint Secretary, Department of Environment

Dr. R.K. Dixit, Director, Legal Treaties Division, Ministry of External
Affairs

Prof. A.K. Mishra, Professor, National Council of Educational Research
and Training

Mr. M.C.X. Saxmy, Senior Environmental Officer, Department of Environment

IRAN

*Mr. Jafar Asarngin, Charge d'Affaires a.i., Embassy of Iran in Sri Lanka */*

MALDIVES

Hon. Mohamed Mustafa Hussain, Minister of Health (Leader)

Dr. Abdul Samad Abdullah, Director, National Health Services, Ministry of Health

Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, Charge d'Affaires for the Maldives for Sri Lanka, Maldivian Embassy

NEPAL **/

PAKISTAN

Air Marshal Hon. Inamul Haque Khan, Minister for Housing, Works, Water and Power (Leader)

Mr. Mohammed Waliulla Khan Khalshgi, Ambassador for Pakistan in Sri Lanka

Mr. Shamsul Haq, Deputy Secretary, Environment and Urban Affairs Division, Ministry of Housing and Works

Mr. Abdur Rauf Mubib, Minister, Embassy of Pakistan in Sri Lanka

Mr. Aslam Rizvi, Second Secretary, Embassy of Pakistan in Sri Lanka

SRI LANKA

Hon. Lalith Athulathmudali, Minister of Trade and Shipping (Leader on Monday, 23 February 1981)

Hon. Gamini Disanayake, Minister of Lands and Land Development and Minister of Mahaweli Development (Leader on Tuesday, 24 February 1981)

Hon. Festus Perera, Minister of Fisheries (Leader on Wednesday, 25 February 1981)

Mr. P.C. Debulana, Deputy Minister, Local Government, Housing and Construction (Deputy Leader)

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**/ Due to last minute delays in departure of the Ministerial delegation.*

***/ Delegation announced but unable arrive due to technical reasons.*

SRI LANKA (con'td)

- Mr. K.H.J. Wijayadasa, Acting Secretary, Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Construction
- Mr. Ivan Samarawickrama, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Lands and Land Development
- Mr. D.B.J. Abeygunasekara, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research
- Mr. I.M.W. Bandara, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research (as alternative delegate with Mr. Abeygunasekara)
- Mr. Aloy Fernando, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries
- Dr. Leslie Herath, Chairman, Water Resources Board
- Mr. Charitha Ratwatte, Chairman, National Youth Services
- Mr. Marriak Perera, Director of National Planning
- Mr. P. Weerasakara, Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of State
- Mr. W.D. Ailapperuma, Director (Planning & Project Development), Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Construction
- Mr. H.S. Subasinghe, Additional General Manager, Ceylon Electricity Board
- Dr. M.M.J. Herath, Director (Scientific Affairs), Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs
- Mr. Arjuna Kannangara, Prime Minister's Office
- Mr. A.M.C. Gunasekara, Deputy Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. W.B. Selvanayagam, Deputy Director, Ministry of Plan Implementation

OTHER STATES

SWEDEN

- Mr. Rolf Beijer, Head of Development Co-operation Office, Embassy of Sweden in Sri Lanka

UNITED NATIONS BODIES

Economic and Social Commission
for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)*/

Mr. S. Thampi, Programme Officer,
Environmental Co-ordinating Unit

Regional Centre for Technology
Transfer (UN-ESCAP/RCTT)

Dr. C.V.S. Ratnam, Counterpart
Administrator

United Nations Development
Programme (UNDP)

Mr. Y.Y. Kim, Resident Representative
of UNDP in Sri Lanka

Miss D.B. Brooker, Programme Officer

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural
Organization (UNESCO)

Mr. V.G. Padomtain, Director,
Regional Office for Science and
Technology for South and Central
Asia, New Delhi

Dr. W.D. Ponniah, Regional Adviser
in Environmental Education, Regional
Office for Education in Asia and
the Pacific, Bangkok

World Health Organization (WHO)

Mr. H.E. Suppi, WHO Sanitary Engineer,
o/o WHO Programme Co-ordinator,
Colombo

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Mr. R.S. Skates, Manager, Social
Infrastructure Division

World Tourism Organization (WTO)

Mr. H.N. Bandy, Regional Secretary
for South Asia, Secretariat for
South Asia, Colombo

Mr. R. Theivendra, Programme Officer,
Secretariat for South Asia, Colombo

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*/ Mr. J.B.P. Maramba, Executive Secretary, was unable to attend due to unavoidable reasons and sent a message which was circulated.

GUEST OF THE SECRETARIAT

Marga Institute

Mr. Thilak Abeyaratnawardenne,
Research Officer

APPENDIX II

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME:
SECRETARIAT

High Level Meeting to Initiate the
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

18-25 February 1981
Colombo, Sri Lanka

AGENDA

(Ministers' Meeting, 23-25 February 1981)

1. Opening of meeting
 2. Election of officers
 3. Adoption of agenda
 4. The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme:
 - (i) Statements by Heads of Delegations
 - (ii) Consideration of the report of the officials' meeting
 5. Declaration on establishment of SACEP
 6. Other matters
 7. Adoption of report and closure of meeting
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INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY THE HON. R. PREMADASA, M.P.,
PRIME MINISTER OF SRI LANKA AT THE
MEETING OF MINISTERS OF THE
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

23 February 1981

I am very happy to welcome you all to the Ministers' Meeting for the establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. Your presence in Colombo today reflects the interest that the Governments and people of the South Asian region have shown in the protection and management of the environment in which we live. It is also a recognition of the need to work together in co-operation to meet the challenge of environmental management for development in our part of the world.

I have no doubt that you will all agree with me that the need to find solutions to the problems of environment is critical. Indeed at no time in human history, has the need for remedial action been so urgent or insistent. In recent years, there has been increasing doubt about the validity of conventional growth patterns. Both in the developing world as in the developed world, the value of the quality of life has come to the forefront. Measured in the conventional terms of gross domestic output, the economic performance of many developing countries, have been close to targeted growth rates. However, in many critical areas little progress has been made. Particularly this is so in the sectors which contribute to the over-all betterment of the quality of life. This is true both at national and international levels. We are still confronted with the problems of rapidly growing populations. We face the irreversible problem of a depletion of natural resources. We are plagued with inflation, the depression of world trade and a marked deterioration in the global environment.

/All

All of our countries need to sustain our economic and social development to meet the demands of a growing population. Development requires an ever expanding utilization of our natural resources and the environment. It is now well known, that in the development process, the environment -- the life support system of the society -- can be impaired, as well as enhanced. The methods we choose, the strategies we adopt, could constitute either a constraint or the potential for the achievement of the basic goals of development. It is therefore essential that the mutually dependent relationships between development and environment be fully understood in our strategies for development. This is so at national as well as at regional and international levels.

Serious preoccupation with environmental problems is a relatively recent phenomenon in Sri Lanka as well as in most of the South Asian countries. Of course, there has always been concern for issues relating to environment. But it was only in the last few years that new problems have emerged which have given it an entirely new dimension. Paradoxically, these resulted from the efforts made by our countries to accelerate development.

Some of the problems can be attributed to the growth and extension of primary export activities. These had serious effects on the depletion of our best located non-renewable natural resources. It resulted in the deterioration of resources, such as forests, marine life and agricultural land. Yet, other problems are related to the process of "modernization". This has been specially so in agriculture, industry, transportation, urbanization and the attempt to reproduce in our countries, the life-styles and patterns of the developed world. There are problems caused too by the pressure of the growing numbers of displaced rural and urban poor on increasingly scarce land resources. In the rural areas, the clearing of forests and the destruction of soil cover has led to pollution and contamination of both land and water.

/There

There is, therefore, no doubt that the increased environmental degradation and depletion of resources which results from human activity in our countries, are due mostly to growing numbers and the rising per capita production and consumption. These situations stem from the specific technology of production and the pattern of consumption currently in use.

The dilemma for us in the developing world is that there is also an urgent need for development. Poverty brings in its wake a form of environmental degradation which forces its victims into destructive processes while leaving them without the means to cope with the ensuing results. It is no longer possible to contrast the preservation of the environment with the necessity for development. Both are related and inseparable expressions of the capacity of man to improve his life as well as to provide for the well being of future generations.

It is in this context that I welcome the establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, which could provide the basis for a joint effort at the regional level to overcome our common problems. The wealth and variety of experience in the South Asian region in making possible sustained improvements in the quality and life of their people is extraordinary. The experience ranges from the appropriate application of traditional technologies to harmonious human settlement and adjustments to existing ecosystems. We have had imaginative uses of what has been customarily regarded as waste matter.

In this situation there is no doubt that the decisions that this distinguished gathering will take, will have practical application for the countries within our region. It is our hope, I am sure, that they will have utility also for the other regions and for international co-operation for development.

I commend the steps taken by the Regional Office of UNEP to establish the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. What should we hope to achieve through this meeting and through the Programme in the future? Our first objective, I should think, should be to present

/a coherent

a coherent framework of ideas and prescriptions that would enable Governments within the region to discuss, and analyse meaningfully, the integration of environmental concerns with economic goals and policies. We should identify to what extent such integration may require changes in existing life-styles and patterns of development. Equally important would be the need to stimulate a continuing effort, in individual countries in the region to adopt environmentally sound projects, programmes and policies. To that end, emphasis should be placed on carefully selected fields for action at the national and regional levels. Finally, an objective which appears to be worth pursuing, is an exchange of ideas and expressions on not only the manner of formulating long-term perspectives and strategies, but also on the practical examples which testify to the validity of such perspectives.

I am happy, therefore, that Sri Lanka was able to host this most important meeting and to provide facilities for the establishment of the Office of the Programme in Colombo.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Director and staff of the Regional Office of UNEP who initiated the establishment of this Co-operative Programme, and to the distinguished delegates of all member countries who have extended their co-operation for its success. We can all be gratified that today we are contributing to the beginning of a process of fundamental importance.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in formally inaugurating this meeting. I thank you.

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MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM
DR. MOSTAFA K. TOLBA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

It is with great pleasure that I wish to convey my warmest greetings and felicitations at the inauguration of the Meeting of Ministers to set up the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. It had been my earnest intention to attend this High Level Meeting personally, for which I had, in fact, tentatively made arrangement. It was only due to entirely unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances that I have now not been able to be with you. At the outset, therefore, I wish to express my sincere regrets at not participating personally at the inauguration.

I recall with great warmth my visits to many of the SACEP countries during my previous term of office as Executive Director and the close personal associations I was able to develop with many of the leaders, some of whom are today also at this Meeting. Just at this beginning of my new term of office as Executive Director of UNEP, I wish to note the support and encouragement that I have always received from the SACEP countries, both personally and officially. I remain grateful to them and through this message seek to reciprocate their own goodwill and co-operation so readily extended to me.

The launching of a South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme is, indeed, an initiative of indisputable significance for the SACEP countries, for the world community, and from the point of view of UNEP and the United Nations. I have had the benefit of following the preparations for this Meeting through the clear and concise documentation for it and the Report of the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting held at Bangalore last March. I wish to cite here a few of the aspects which are of specific significance:

/- Subregional

- Subregional programmes have already been launched in other parts of the region - in the South Pacific, in ASEAN, in the Mekong Basin. The South Asia Programme thus comes later. Yet, what SACEP has achieved is something unique; where there was no organization, no machinery for co-operation, the countries have decided to set up machinery for it. I am, indeed, gratified that the environment has been considered important enough to take this step forward in co-operation. Perhaps I should be even more gratified that environment served as the instrument through which, I believe for the first time, a co-operative system in South Asia came to be set up. The experience of working together that this will undoubtedly create, augurs well for this rich and ancient subregion; it may serve also as the harbinger of wider forms of co-operation in the future.

- It is clear from the excellent programme preparations that resource conservation and rational utilization, as ideas, have all been geared also to development for the benefit of peoples, seeking to achieve harmonization of environment with development and to secure sustained development without destruction. It is an approach which immediately evokes the fullest support of UNEP and, I sincerely trust, from the international community. In these preparations you have, indeed, taken full stock of the vast losses that have occurred in the past, are continuing to occur and threaten to do so in the future, if we do not act now, in almost all your natural resources, ranging over forests, soils, crops, pastures, mangroves and seas. It has been mentioned, for instance, that 'by the Year 2000 there will be something like 1,000 million people living under the shadows and under the waters of the Himalayas along its sub-continental range'. It has been mentioned, in the case of one country in your subregion, that 'its most important export has been the enormous tonnage of soil that washes down annually to other countries', leading also to disasters and floods in these countries. The coastal ecosystem in yet another country of the subregion has been said 'to constitute the largest such living laboratory in the world'; and some of the island atolls

/in

in the Indian Ocean are 'unique even by South Pacific standards'. The area of the greatest damage in the last great cyclone that hit the Bay of Bengal happened to be exactly that hinterland where the mangroves had been destroyed. One could go on; and these are but examples of a situation which you have now determined to change, for the enhancement of the environment and for sustaining development.

- A highly noteworthy aspect of the co-operation, and perhaps a sound lead and example to others, is the self-help or self-financing component that has been built into the SACEP structure from the beginning. Not least, this has included a strong recognition of the 'wealth of capability and expertise' available within your own countries. At the same time, this is not considered as an excuse for potential donor countries and bodies not to play their part, in the spirit and in the fulfilment of TCDC, ECDC, NIEO, and the NIDS. */

- Finally, as one good reason for the confidence behind the establishment of SACEP, your countries have already set up strong national environmental administrative structures, with increasing national environmental administrative structures, with increasing national commitment and outstanding leadership. I note with warm recollection that no less than the Honourable Prime Minister is the Head of the Environment Organization in Sri Lanka. A similar development has recently materialized in India with the Honourable Prime Minister as Head of Environment for that country. In Iran, the environmental authority has been located in the Office of the Prime Minister. Elsewhere in the SACEP region, commitment at the highest levels has been equally clear and unequivocal.

These are but a few examples of why we attach such a great importance to the fulfilment of your co-operative effort.

/Before

*/ Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries (TCDC); Economic Co-operation Among Developing Countries (ECDC); New International Economic Order (NIEO); New International Development Strategy (NIDS).

Before I conclude I should mention that the programme priorities as you have identified them accord greatly with UNEP's priorities of work being undertaken at various levels. I wish to assure you that the benefit of UNEP's own programmes and such assistance as we will be able to give you through them are fully available to SACEP.

I convey my deep pride and gratitude to you for the step being taken today and wish you God speed and prosperity in your endeavour.

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APPENDIX V

ADDRESS BY MR. C. SURIYAKUMARAN,
DIRECTOR REGIONAL OFFICE AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC,
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

On behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba, and on my own behalf, I wish to express my deep and sincere thanks today for the opportunity you have given me to address you. To you, Sir, as the distinguished Prime Minister of this country, we are particularly grateful for the inspiration, the practical wisdom and guidance that you have given us in your inauguration of this Meeting of Ministers for the establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. These are gifts which those who know you have come readily to expect of you and to value from you. But we are grateful also for another reason. This is the great strength that you have lent to SACEP simply by your being here with us. By so doing, I have no doubt that you have also committed the force of your leadership to this stage of initial nurturing and growth of an undertaking of great importance. I am sure all of us here remain beholden to you for this and for the strength that we shall draw from the assurance of your interest in the establishment and future of this organization.

Sir, this is an occasion of great moment. It is so, not because we are meeting on environment, important as it is, but because of the co-operation that it has now forged. Perhaps it is fortunate that the cause of the environment, the basis for millennia past and to come, of our survival and our future, was the means for this culmination of the idea of subregional co-operation for South Asia, which you Mr. Prime Minister have bid us witness today. We have come to the point where arrangements for setting up this co-operation can now be made. It was not something that took place suddenly. The Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting held in Bangalore, India, 10-15 March 1980 was an

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important stage, in a process that began before it and followed through later. The countries represented here had given considerable attention to the matters involved, through exchanges of ideas and consultations, over a period of time. In the course of progress with this, countries saw common interests and faced similar challenges to their prosperity and to prospects for their future, arising from the neglect of the past. They perceived clear opportunities to overcome the threats to attainment of a sustainable and better future. That road was travelled, before arriving at the High Level Meeting starting today. In the course of doing so, as the Bangalore Meeting pointed out, a spirit of co-operation also became manifest that, it was sure, would endure. That spirit must be reckoned an outstanding outcome of the Bangalore Meeting.

These are not unknown to you. The Bangalore Meeting, as the immediate precursor to the present High Level Meeting, also provided a clear practical basis for the co-operation that it envisaged. I shall not go into the details of this, except to touch on them briefly in relation to the work of the Meeting of Senior Officials concluded last week, in preparation for this Meeting of the Ministers.

Before I do so, perhaps I may pause to emphasize a vital assumption in the concerns and opportunities of the environment, as the Meeting in Bangalore saw it. Behind the identification of the environmental constraints and of the needs for action was an outstanding realization, that these were the concerns not merely of the environment but of development itself. The areas that were selected for mutual co-operation among the countries were seen also as of fundamental importance to the advancement of national development and welfare; the 'conservation of resources' in wise environment management became, indeed, a partnership in the 'conservation of development'. In many places and over many areas and over long periods, huge resources had been irrationally exhausted, depleted, deteriorated, unused, in the process of production, as also through poverty, in all our countries. It happened across sectors, in agriculture, in industry, in infrastructures, in human settlements, in the mountains and rangelands, the forests, pastures and farms, the coasts

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and the offshores. There had been also a dramatic neglect, although now being realized only through the energy crisis, in the use of our renewable resources and residues - agricultural, industrial and municipal - which could have, and would have, provided major answers to our current concerns of stabilizing the environment and equally of meeting some of the most serious economic problems in supplies of fuel, food, fodder, fertilizer, industrial materials and materials for construction. It has come to be seen beyond doubt, from the Himalayan ecosystem at one end, to the Indian Ocean at the other, that the 'environment-resources-development' relationship is an essential one and inseparable one; one which has to be pursued by urgent national, as well as co-operative, action among the countries. As a result, co-operation for environment involving the three components implied in this action - of the restoration of resources, ways and means of maintaining resources while utilizing them, and the enlargement of resource supplies for our economies by tapping renewable and reusable resources - become far more than idle preoccupations peripheral to the mainstream of poverty amelioration and rapid development. Thus, in whatever areas identified for co-operation under SACEP and in whatever forms of co-operation chosen as instruments, all of them have one aim, namely contribution to the stability of the resources of the region and the maximization of development and welfare of the peoples.

Sir, I mentioned that I shall come back briefly to the concrete conclusions of the Bangalore Meeting. As a result of its deliberations, the Meeting formulated the outlines of a practical plan of action. It agreed to establish SACEP; to acknowledge the offer of the Sri Lanka delegation on behalf of the Government to provide facilities for the Secretariat of the Co-ordinating Committee of SACEP; and that all countries of the South Asia region would extend their help. It also identified programme areas, as well as focal points in countries, in each case with region-wide responsibility for given subject areas of the programme.

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In furtherance of its decisions it also set out certain brief guidelines on the Co-ordinating Committee, Secretariat and Focal Points. It urged assistance from all interested co-operating countries and other related bodies. Above all, it had 'no doubt that the spirit of co-operation manifested would endure'.

It is on these foundations and recommendations that the High Level Meeting of Officials last week, and of Ministers today, has been convened. I am very happy to report that the Meeting of Officials successfully accomplished the tasks that were assigned to it. It has provided clear recommendations on the arrangements for the Co-ordinating Committee, the Focal Points and the SACEP Secretariat; has identified select priorities in the programme area, which are also concrete, development related and of benefit to member countries as a whole; and has thoroughly examined the ways and possibilities of providing both immediate and sustained financial and technical support to SACEP. It has made these recommendations in its succinct report submitted to the Ministers and which is now before this Meeting. I commend this to the Meeting and have no doubt that it will receive the attention it deserves.

Your Officials' Meeting also acted on two matters on your behalf in the first phase of clearing ideas. It has outlined a Draft Declaration on the establishment of SACEP a matter which was recommended by the Bangalore Meeting for consideration at this High Level Meeting. It has also, in similar manner, considered the question of the main official or officials, designations and nominations as appropriate, in a spirit of consensus and friendly co-operation.

These matters are before you now, with a recommendation by the Meeting of Officials for a broad endorsement of their deliberations as expressed in their report; and for consideration and adoption as appropriate, of the suggested Draft Declaration and their recommendations on staffing.

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Before I conclude, I wish to be allowed to advert to a point that I mentioned at the Meeting of Officials last week and indicated that I would take up briefly at this Meeting. This is the role that we expect to be played by the international community at large, in particular the interested developed co-operating countries and international, global and regional financing institutions and related bodies. I want to emphasize strongly to these countries and bodies, in particular to those that have not been able to be present with us today, the importance of undertaking serious appraisal of the current, largely *ad hoc*, structure and quantum of their support to objectives such as we have today before you. They are objectives that go beyond 'peace-keeping', to 'peace-building'; and replace incomparably large funds staked out during crises, with much less provided before they occur. I mentioned last week at the Officials' Meeting that positive ideas and intentions for special financing to developing countries have, indeed, come from certain developed countries themselves, some even pioneering these ideas. I should mention two such instances, even though the first one of these still awaits translation into governmental decision.

A United States report officially commissioned by the President, entitled 'The Global 2000 Report to the President' submitted last year, warned against serious stresses to the world's resources and environment within the next two decades, with the outlook for many of the poor being worse than now, and life for most on earth more precarious than now, unless the nations of the world act decisively. It considered an era of unprecedented co-operation and commitment essential and recommended the need for the United States itself to co-operate 'generously and justly' with other nations. It affirmed that there were many unfulfilled opportunities for this co-operation in efforts to relieve poverty, hunger, pressure of population and economic and environmental productivity.

The other country, Sweden, has proposed that additional funds should be mobilized to strengthen environmental activities in the developing countries. At the last annual Governing Council Session

of UNEP last year, Sweden stated that 'its Government was prepared to make substantial additional contributions to support increased efforts by UNEP in developing countries'. It also indicated that in doing so, it would expect 'other countries to be prepared to do the same'. Sweden repeated this offer at the summer session of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations last July in Geneva; and reiterated it again, at the Special Session of the General Assembly held late last year, also expressing the hope that such additionality in funding support would soon be 'operational'.

While these are from outside our region and therefore I have referred to them first, I should mention a step taken by one country, right among us, calling for very special recognition. This is the ready offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Governing Council Session of UNEP last year, to consider making available financial resources for regional environmental programmes and activities in the SACEP region. In doing so, Iran also called on other countries to join in such a step and assured UNEP of its great interest and further co-operation in environmental matters of this region.

Honourable Prime Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have consciously sought to make myself brief, as befitting the occasion. It is not a moment at which I should choose to say more than I had felt was essential. In closing, may I echo the words of my Executive Director in his Message to you. The proposed co-operation and the proposed organizational arrangements are pioneering in their nature, reflect the great concerns of development in our region and the commitment of our national leadership to it. The experience of working together could also be a basis for the future in a widening horizon of co-operation. SACEP as a structure, thus represents as much the expression of a co-operative will, as it is of a sound and beneficial programme for the countries. The tasks themselves constitute a worthy cause, fully capable of attainment. Our large populations and the poverty of our peoples call for no less.

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In this spirit and in all humility, I wish this Meeting every success and extend the assurances of our full support in all the decisions that it may make in fulfilment of these goals.

I thank you.

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STATEMENT MADE BY HON. ESMATULLAH WALLI,
AFGHANISTAN

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan always supported the idea of co-operation at regional, national and international levels in various fields of activity. It therefore whole-heartedly supports the co-operative effort among the South Asian countries to preserve the environment.

We believe that this type of co-operation will help the developing countries to use their limited resources wisely and help development of their countries.

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) no doubt would be a landmark in the endeavour of the countries of the region to solve their environment problems together. As a country which believes in regional co-operation at different levels we support this programme.

I wish to thank the Government of Sri Lanka and the United Nations Environment Programme for the excellent arrangements made for the success of this meeting and make our stay in this beautiful country comfortable.

Thank you.

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STATEMENT MADE BY HON. DR. R.A. GHANI,
MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY,
BANGLADESH

On this auspicious day, I, on behalf of the Bangladesh delegation, would first like to convey our warmest congratulations to you on your election as Chairman of this meeting. My delegation is optimistic of a rewarding outcome from this meeting under your able leadership. Bangladesh, as you know, Mr. Chairman, was at the forefront, encouraging the establishment of SACEP when it first met in Bangalore, India. I take this opportunity to express our sincere support and unflagging interest in the foundation of the SACEP concept on a firm and realistic footing. My cordial thanks are also extended to those, whose selfless efforts and genuine attempts are responsible for giving a final shape to the initial plan to formulate a co-operative programme in this subregion in the field of environment.

I would like to express my gratitude and admiration to the host country, Sri Lanka, for taking immense trouble to provide necessary facilities for organizing this momentous meeting.

Exclusive stress on the ideas of prime interest in the field of environment has led to the identification of areas requiring co-operation and mutual support. Once again, I heartily welcome member countries, who had readily pledged mutual help and support in solving our common problems.

Mr. Chairman,

It goes without saying that SACEP will undoubtedly offer a wide beneficial support, and exchange of ideas and plans, which will appropriately supplement the national environmental development and management deficiencies. Commonalities of the ecological characteristic of the subregion further strengthen the concept of co-ordination and reciprocal interdependence amongst neighbouring countries. A unifying

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thread linking development and environmental managements is one of the prime objectives each nation is striving for. Hence, it is a great pleasure that the challenges and opportunities portrayed in the realm of environment, are to be met through the united endeavours of SACEP.

The creation of circumstances that lead to a healthier environmental surrounding, has a very special implication on the deteriorating environmental conditions in the South Asia region. Environmental conservation programmes under the aegis of SACEP will cast a positive influence in the quality of life. Guidelines insinuated into the national planning procedures for combating pollution as well as the financial apportionments by SACEP will decisively serve as a rejuvenating catalyst. SACEP's theme of integrated framework of action rather than isolated national endeavours, should serve as a very effective strategy for environment conservation programmes. My delegation strongly endorses the idea of evolving a development strategy with a special note of emphasis on the limited resources position and expertise of the less developed countries. The various factors of environment is indeed co-terminus with the goal of development and these two concepts have a certain amount of inter-dependence and complementarity. At the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting of SACEP convened in March, 1980 at Bangalore, India, Bangladesh was identified as the appropriate region to take responsibility as the focal point with regard to conservation of corals, mangroves, deltas, coastal areas and island ecosystems.

Coral islands and coastal areas are fragile ecosystems many of which are currently being subjected to pollution from artificial and natural sources, over and improper exploitation and abuse. Coastal ecosystems have proved very vulnerable to pollution both from land-based sources and from the sea, which adversely affects or progressively diminishes vital biological functions. The presence of human activities in coastal areas has grown very considerably in recent times, and physical destruction of the coastline in many parts of the world, together with pollution are seriously affecting and sometimes destroying altogether

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the mechanisms permitting the reproduction of marine life. Both natural and artificial situations contribute avidly to the deterioration of the coastal environment. Oil spillage from ocean liners, pollution due to toxic effluents from industrial plants, large scale untreated sewage discharge and natural agents of erosion contribute to the ravage and injury caused to the balanced ecosystems of the coastal areas. Since the last meeting at Bangalore, India, Bangladesh has gone a long way in carrying on with her responsibilities as focal point of this subject area. Bangladesh with her 1,700 mile long coastal fringe skirted by innumerable coastal reefs is ideally situated for carrying on research studies concerning erosion and degradation of coastal areas.

At the Bangalore Meeting, it was also agreed that in view of the great importance of and potential for mangroves from the sociological, economic and ecological standpoints, a far greater efforts to propagate them should be undertaken. Schemes are underway to effectively carry out afforestation of 100,000 acres of mangrove forests over five year time period in the coastal areas of Bangladesh. Complementary inputs in the form of financial and technical assistance is sought to fortify the existing facilities and infrastructures. Financial assistance is also required for activities related to island ecosystems.

Topographically, Bangladesh exhibits features of subtropical regions. Unfortunately, even in Bangladesh, the extent of greenery is diminishing due to unplanned activities. Bangladesh wishes to express her grave concern at the mushrooming pockets of desert within her own domain. In Bangladesh, desertification, salt-water intrusion and salinity encroachment is alarmingly increasing, threatening agriculture and human habitat. The aspect of desertification in Bangladesh is not the case of simple advance of the desert edge. In addition to these features, there are other ill-effects that emerge as by-products from the problem of reduction in the quantum of river water flow especially from the river Ganges. The rivers of Bangladesh had been providing sufficient water for irrigation, drinking, transportation and are supporting congested habitation along their banks. Since

last few years the river flow has been drastically reduced and this has adversely affected the whole region. In the coastal regions, the intrusion of saline water into the mainland has also turned a sizeable segment of agricultural land unfit for agriculture or for pastoral purposes.

Bangladesh is geographically placed in the pathway of the monsoon regions and quite heavy soil erosion is noticeable. Evidence of large-scale losses that occur from soil erosion is not difficult to come by. In Bangladesh, apart from erosion, deterioration of soils also occur due to removal of forest covers. Due to the ever increasing search for fuelwood by a rapidly increasing population and due to haphazard and unplanned deforestation, much of the land is left uncared for and as a result, they quickly become sterile and are in danger of desertification. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has also embarked upon very ambitious afforestation programmes.

Marine pollution abatement efforts have been recently taken up. A National Committee has been formed for this purpose. A few oceanographic expeditions have been undertaken for assessing the condition of the sea as well as the amount of damage caused to marine flora and fauna ecosystems.

Mr. Chairman,

In most developing countries, many on-going environment conservation projects are making significant headway and the main handicap appears to be the national will and determination. I feel that this forum is well equipped to provide means for including needed technical, financial and other external assistance that the countries in the subregion have decided upon in furtherance of their programmes. My delegation calls upon SACEP to come forward as a funding agency with a view to supplementing the resource mobilization process of individual Governments.

I would emphasize the fact that the establishment of SACEP is a timely step to combat the degrading environmental situation of South Asia region. It is realized that accelerated economic growth and social changes and betterment are coherently linked to the pursuit of

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environmentally sound development programmes. It is neither possible to reach a break-through in quality of life or achieve a diversified and balanced material prosperity without the use of indigenous natural resources and a rational, dynamic relationship between man and the fragile ecosystem in which he finds his being.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of my delegation, I would call for an improved and just environmental order so that resources can be optimally utilized without maladjustments, disturbing the ecosystem. This calls for extended co-operation, friendship, goodwill and understanding amongst the member nations of this body. We can ill-afford to waste valuable time. Our common endeavours for the environmental cause to ensure sustained development must continue without interruption.

The concept of SACEP has truly recognized that environment is a national, regional and international affair and can be handled very effectively if there is awareness of all concerned and effective participation and co-operation of all nations concerned. In this gigantic task of maintaining proper environment which ensures better living condition can be best achieved by mutual co-operation and help. Never before, the environment has been threatened so badly by ever increasing demand on natural resources as it is today. In this context, this meeting is very timely and appropriate.

The existence of life on this planet is dependent on clean environment. Sooner we realize this truth the better it is. We must save the environment from all forms of degeneration at any cost to ensure our existence and sustained growth of civilization on this planet.

Mr. Chairman, I would strongly propose that a suitable ENVIRONMENT SECURITY PLAN be worked out for the region which would adequately ensure preservation of the environment from the assault brought about by the development process now so common to all the countries of the region. Such security is a must for the continued well-being of the human race on this planet.

I would like to conclude Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,
by saying:

Our rivers must flow,
Our trees must grow,
Our meadows must remain green,
To ensure our environment clean,
For a better life of our children
and our children's children.

Finally, I like to express our heartfelt gratitude and thanks
to the people of Sri Lanka.

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STATEMENT MADE BY HON. SRI C.P.N. SINGH,
MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
AND ELECTRONICS, INDIA

I consider it a great honour to address this important meeting and am grateful for the hospitality and kindness shown to me by one delegation, the Government of Sri Lanka. What better venue than this lovely city of Colombo can there be for a gathering of representatives from South Asia!

All nations, developed or developing, are concerned in today's world about environment. Emphasis in this regard might differ depending on the particular situation in a country, but the fact is what Delhi's wailing Urdu poet, Mir Taqui Mir, early in the last century bemoaned, albeit, in a different context, saying "be it me, you, or the poet, all are captives of the same lock of hair".

We, the nation of South Asia have assembled here under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme to discuss and find solutions for the problems of environmental degradation which we have been experiencing in our respective countries. The environment is our common concern along with all the other nations of the world. In our developing situation, we may still have an opportunity to fashion our environmental goals and paths in a manner that will not irrevocably destroy the environment and all that it offers us. Therefore, the basic goal of our efforts concerning the environment should be the management of the human use of natural resources, so that they may provide a sustainable basis for development of our nations and people.

At the inaugural session of the Indian Science Congress at Benaras, the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi expressed the view that "the greed of the rich and the needs of the poor" had caused, or are causing, irrevocable damage to the ecosystems.

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Our nations are reeling under the pressure of population and the ills of poverty and under-development. Unless these are effectively overcome, our environment is likely to be strained to the utmost. Population, poverty and the condition of under-development have impact on the health and integrity of our natural environment, i.e. land, soil, water, forests, wildlife and so on. On the other hand, ill-planned and indiscriminate development very often destroys the very fabric of life support systems in the environment. We are all too familiar with deforestation of vast areas and the dire consequences of soil erosion, flooding and drought and ultimately desertification. We are also experiencing the ill effects of uncontrolled urban growth, which has resulted in slums and squatter settlements, poor sanitation and inadequate health care facilities and the general erosion of the quality of life of the people. Industrial development, while it fulfils the desirable objectives of employment and production of goods and services for the people, is also accompanied by the scourge of environmental pollution. Many of our water courses are loaded with pollutants. The atmosphere, near industrial conglomerations is becoming foul. It is essential that national development proceeds along rational, sustainable pathways, which are environmentally sound and ecologically acceptable. Environmental conservation, in its broadest sense, is the very basis of all development.

India also is experiencing a wide array of environmental problems. The stresses on our environmental resources are mainly due to the pressures for satisfying the basic human needs of a large and growing population. At the same time, already established industrial development in the country has begun to pose serious problems of environmental pollution in certain areas.

I would like to state here that India has always been concerned about the ecological side of human life. Our Honourable Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has given us a dynamic lead in this regard and, despite the monumental nature of the tasks before her, she has always made herself available to any serious student or observer of the

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ecological scene and has lent her hand to the humblest of efforts if it is a programme of meeting what we are calling here the environmental challenge. The motto adopted at Bangalore "before you look outside for what you need, look inside for what you have" has naturally gladdened her as it would few others and she shares with all of us here, at Colombo, the rising concern for preservation of the environmental treasures. The Government of India has recently created a Department of Environment under the charge of the Honourable Prime Minister. This Department provides explicit recognition to the Articles and Directive Principles in the Constitution of India, which enjoins the Government and the citizens to protect the environment. There is a tremendous task ahead of this infant Department. Its functions include policy planning and promotion of environmental awareness, research, training and associated development of the subject, regulation and implementation of pollution control laws, environmental appraisal of development projects, co-ordination of activities relating to environment at the local, state, regional, national and international levels and management and conservation of critical ecosystems. This wide range of tasks and functions will naturally take sometime to be properly organized. There is a need to train a variety of specialists to effectively discharge these responsibilities.

At this juncture, the objectives of the proposed programme - South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme - is most welcome to my country. Through this forum, we expect to receive the benefit of the experience of environmental management strategies from the countries in the region with similar problems. It is through co-operation that we can resolve our common problems and mutually support each others' endeavours. In this regard it is important that bilateral links be strengthened and progressively lead to regional co-operation; for, we must remember that a chain can only be as strong as the weakest link.

The programme in environment proposed to be undertaken under the aegis of SACEP is certainly an ambitious one. I feel that it may be a good idea to take up a few programmes and do them well rather than diffuse our efforts over a wide range thereby thinning our resources.

I would place co-operative endeavour to promote environmental education and training in this region of South Asia as the number one priority, for, I believe, that it is when the environmental consciousness of the people is aroused that the political will to ensure appropriate action by Governments can be generated. The programme of environmental education is not as simple as it appears. Communication of ideas to the masses has always been a difficult proposition in countries which have a diversity of life styles, languages and customs. We have to overcome the social, political, economic and technological barriers in order to transmit the message of the environment in appropriate packages. Another area of importance to our countries is the development and implementation of adequate procedures for environmental assessment of development activities. Such assessments must necessarily include not just the physical environment but also the socio-economic environment. This is a very complex task, which cannot always be reduced to mathematical formulae. We can at best hope to get certain general guidelines which are flexible enough for taking into consideration the local needs and issues and arriving at a reasonably sound judgement of environmental impacts, both positive and negative.

In a similar way, most of the other programmes proposed to be pursued and for which various countries in the region have assumed responsibility are no doubt of considerable importance in selected situations. For example, social forestry is of grave concern to all our nations in the context of the search for alternate energy sources. We have had excellent results in social forestry in one of our States. Experts from other countries are welcome to come and see for themselves what we have begun to achieve in this field.

Thus, while my Government wholeheartedly welcomes this effort to co-operate in environmental programmes we would also like to point to the lessons drawn from past experience with United Nations agencies. We are anxious that the limited resources available to us be spent on substantive programmes to help one another. Unfortunately, the tendency in the past has been to stress more the building up of a large,

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unwieldy Secretariat with its consequent impact on overhead expenses. Therefore, may I suggest, that as a general principle we attempt to keep the Secretariat as small and as tightly knit as possible with the emphasis on working out worth-while and cost-effective efforts to co-operate in mutually supportive plans for environmental protection. Ultimately, it is not the amount of money that we can marshal which will matter. It is the commitment, co-operative endeavour and dedication of member Governments to this important task which will decide the success or otherwise of the tasks that we set for ourselves at this meeting.

I understood that the meeting of the officials of the Member States of this region which concluded its deliberations last week has formulated definite proposals in regard to programme priorities, organizational infrastructure, the manner and mode of inter-state co-operation. I wish to assure you, on behalf of my Government that we shall take necessary steps to meet these expectations in the field of technical expertise and I do hope that the will of the Member States to attain the aims of ensuring the conservation and wise use of a shared environment will prevail.

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STATEMENT BY IRAN

In view of the last minute inability of the Ministerial delegation to join the Meeting and the representation of Iran by its Mission at Colombo, there was no formal Statement delivered.

A message was however sent which has been so recorded in the Report and, in part, reflected in the address by the Regional Director of UNEP, forming part of this Report.

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STATEMENT MADE BY HON. MOHAMED MUSTAFA HUSSAIN,
MINISTER OF HEALTH, MALDIVES

The delegation of Maldives takes pleasure in congratulating you, Hon. Lalith Athulathmudali, on the unanimous election as the President of this meeting. We are confident that under your able chairmanship our meeting will be carried out to a successful conclusion.

It is indeed a great honour for us to address this important and august gathering. I take this opportunity to express my country's warm felicitations to the Government and people of our friendly Sri Lanka, for the wonderful host facilities made available to the participants of this meeting. I pay special tribute to the founding father of this programme in our region, Mr. Suriyakumaran, the Regional Representative of UNEP for our region, and in the same spirit to the charismatic Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Hon. Premadasa, for his personal guidance and enlightenment extended towards the establishment of this South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. Further we are most grateful to the Government and people of Sri Lanka for their fine display of political will and commitment by providing the necessary facilities to establish the Secretariat of SACEP. I pay a very special tribute to all those scientists, experts and administrators who had worked so hard to make this event a successful reality.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

The formation of a regionally united body to generate co-operative efforts on a global need, is indeed a progressive step. We normally confront problems as countries of a region, that have common historic, economic, and social backgrounds. In the present instance a common geophysical background.

This meeting of ours addresses to an area which moulds and influences our lives into a particular style or a pattern. That is the environment into which we are born. We are surrounded by it. That environment did, is and will further and improve our lives. It

is an umbrella of nature we cannot escape. But strangely enough, all this time we have not paid much heed, and have somewhat forgotten or neglected the fact that, environment keeps providing us an indispensable power. A power which is essential to our lives. Environment protects us "from cradle to grave". Now it is time that we began to protect the environment.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

Today we are aiming at making an effort jointly to co-operate on an environment programme as countries of a region. However, we must keep in mind that, such a co-operative effort requires full and sincere political will and commitment of all member countries, to realize the noble goals and objectives.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

Our country, the Republic of Maldives is the smallest country in this regional group of countries. Further it is a country, which is composed of over one thousand small islands, each one isolated from the other by sea. Thus forming an environment which is intricately complicated. Maldives, for this reason and more is happy on the birth of this noble endeavour. We are looking forward to sharing and exchanging experiences among the countries of our region.

Thank you.

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STATEMENT MADE BY AIR MARSHAL HON. INAMUL HAQUE KHAN,
MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND WORKS, WATER AND POWER,
PAKISTAN

I would like to join my distinguished colleagues in extending congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, the distinguished Minister for Trade and Shipping of the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, on his election as the Chairman of the Conference. We are confident that under his able leadership the Conference will achieve the laudable objectives for which it has been convened. We have been greatly inspired by the thought provoking Inaugural Address of His Excellency the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and the ideas set forth by him would lead our deliberations to success.

We feel extremely happy and honoured to be visiting this beautiful and friendly country. I and my colleagues are greatly indebted for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made here. The Government of Sri Lanka has certainly taken a momentous decision in hosting this conference enabling the regional countries beset with similar problems to deliberate on such issues, spotlight problems and focus on the need of a co-ordinated approach for solving those.

In the developing countries, the environmental problems are growing at an alarming rate. The phenomenal increase in population and severe food shortages have brought unprecedented pressure on the land. Plant and animal exploitation has led to deforestation, soil erosion, and the general deterioration of land. Millions of acres of land have been brought under desert conditions by water-logging and salinity. The unplanned mass migration of people to large cities from the impoverished countryside has led to the creation of slums, inadequacies of basic amenities of life forcing the people to live under most inhuman conditions. Noise, air, and water pollution besides upsetting the socio-economic conditions of the local areas, have created numerous health hazards.

The basic causes of our environmental troubles are thus complex and deeply imbedded. They include our past tendency to emphasize quantitative growth at the expense of quality, the failure of our economy to provide full accounting for the social costs of environmental pollution; the failure to take environmental factors into account as a normal and integral part of our planning and decision-making; the inadequacy of our institutions for dealing with problems that cut across traditional political boundaries; our dependence on expediencies, without regard to their impact on the environment; and more fundamentally our failure to perceive the environment as a totality and to understand or recognize the fundamental interdependence of all its parts, including man himself.

Earlier, as a consequence of development, the environmental problems became visible in the industrialized nations. With the passage of time and as a result of both development as well as lack of development, the developing countries are today also faced with a number of environmental problems - some of them assuming serious dimensions. Its impact on the developing nations is more intense and pronounced in view of their limited resources, means and technology. Although the Government of Pakistan has accorded priority to environmental protection and made it constitutional responsibility of the Federal and Provincial Government, resource constraints place severe limitations to deal with the issues effectively.

Further, the developing countries operating independent of each other within the region in the field of environment are somewhat handicapped in effectively facing the challenging situation so created. This is so because many of the developing countries do not have expertise in all the disciplines. We have so far been able to develop only a limited number of appropriate technologies suited to our socio-economic conditions and our means are modest and resources are inadequate. Each of us is thus forced to rely on assistance from West in this regard which has its own limitations. The management of environment and saving it from further degradation can, however, be made more effective if the

/developing

developing countries in the region, having identical socio-economic pattern and other important commonalities like the shared struggle for development, the search for resources, for technology, for methods of planning and of management, etc. collaborate and extend technical assistance to each other in deficient areas. Viewed in this perspective, the programme such as SACEP would hopefully provide an excellent opportunity to make the best use of each other's skills and experience in dealing with environmental problems. Needless to say, this would not only reduce our heavy dependence on the industrialized nations but also go a long way in improving the environment of individual countries as well as of the subregion more effectively through management of natural resources and alleviation of poverty over a relatively short span of time.

The Pakistan delegation thus agrees in principle with the objectives of SACEP and would be looking forward to the deliberations and conclusions of this meeting. We would make sincere efforts to make this conference a success.

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STATEMENT MADE BY HON. LALITH ATHULATHMUDALI,
MINISTER OF TRADE AND SHIPPING,
SRI LANKA

I need hardly mention that it is an honour for me to be present here on this historic occasion of the establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, as the Leader of the Sri Lanka delegation.

This Ministerial Meeting, which starts today, should be seen as the culmination of a process of exchange of ideas and consultations among the ten South Asian countries which began more than a year ago. As a result of this process, ideas of fundamental interest in the environment field have found selective expression and led to the recognition of the need for co-operation and mutual support within the region.

Man and the environment are inseparably bound together - man is a part of the biophysical world, acts upon it and is in turn affected by its reactions. The biophysical world is the life-support system of society and provides space, a flow of materials and energy, and a medium for the re-absorption of wastes. These functions of the environment, adequately understood and wisely managed, constitute a basis for the achievement of the goals of development. But many of the characteristics of the recent development patterns, both in the developed and developing countries and in the relations among them, are in conflict with those functions and represent severe actual or potential constraints on the development process. It is essential therefore that the interaction between patterns of development and the environment be fully and explicitly taken into account in the 1980s.

Policies aimed at the harmonization of socio-economic goals with an ecologically sound management of resources and the environment must take into account the diversity of ecological, cultural and

socio-political situations leading to a wide range of required measures and instruments. Given the recent awareness of environmental problems many of these measures and instruments are yet to be identified and explored, presenting a wide field for exchange of experience and regional co-ordination.

Hitherto, in Sri Lanka there has been little awareness of the close relationship between development and environment. Unplanned development, without due regard to the protection and management of the environment has led to a reduction in natural diversity and the degradation of the environment. The increase of population and the changing pattern of living make it necessary for our people to change the natural environment. But such changes are not often made with a full awareness of their consequences on human health and welfare.

In addition, there is no doubt that the accelerated development programmes undertaken in Sri Lanka will generate their own environmental consequences. All the same we cannot deprive our people any longer of the benefits of development programmes, such as employment, higher incomes, better housing, water and other amenities. Therefore the task that confronts Sri Lanka today is one of reconciling development with environmental protection and management. While we can no longer afford to misuse our limited resources, it is essential that all development should take place within the framework of a realistic policy on the environment.

It is in this context that the Government of Sri Lanka welcomes and endorses the establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. At a time when Sri Lanka Government is giving priority to environmental considerations in development; when attempts are being made to create an awareness and a commitment towards the fulfilment of environmental objectives and when the Government is developing institutions and expertise to sustain an environmental regulatory framework which is suited to our country. I have no doubt, that this co-operative programme would prove to be immensely beneficial to us.

/As

As has been already stated by several distinguished Speakers, this programme will establish close co-operation and collaboration between the national authorities in the region in charge of the environment, thus making it possible for programmed action on issues that affect the region as a whole, as well as in projects at the national level in subject areas that are common to the region. It is my firm belief that this Programme, more than anything else, would help our countries to benefit from the experiences and lessons from each other, in our attempts to reconcile accelerated development and the raising of living standards of our people, with the ever increasing need to protect and manage our environment for our benefit as well as for the benefit of generations yet to be born.

We, in Sri Lanka, have taken several positive steps in this direction. One of the major drawbacks that we faced was the absence of a comprehensive legal and institutional framework on environment. There are nearly 80 different laws on the statute book, enacted over a period of one hundred years or more, with a bearing on environmental situations. But all these laws are scattered and administered by different departments at different levels, without over-all co-ordination and policy direction. Also, in a small country like ours, with a high density of population and with a clearly visible delinquency rate - as far as natural resources are concerned - it is of paramount importance that planning and execution of projects which have an impact on the environment should be carefully scrutinized by an environment conscious central agency. Therefore, the Sri Lanka Government has given priority to the establishment of this legal and institutional framework. A National Environment Act, which includes the establishment of a Central Environmental Agency has been passed by our Parliament and is already in our statute book. It is my belief, that our programmes for information, education, training and research in the field of environment would be given the much needed prominence now. It would become much easier for us to co-ordinate all strategies and policies - even the implementation of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme - with the Central Environmental Authority.

I do not intend to go into detail of the other subject areas and the programmes undertaken by Sri Lanka. But I am proud, that we have made some progress in several areas. Our Rural Energy Centre in Pattiayapola, is already engaged in trying out several techniques of solar energy utilization under rural conditions. We have designed and developed a wind-mill suitable for Sri Lanka conditions and is being offered for public acceptance. We have also made some headway on the use of biogas and the use of micro-hydroelectric plants. An area where Sri Lanka has made much advance in our reafforestation programme, where depleted forest cover is being replanted. Our progress in subject areas such as social forestry, conservation of ecosystems and watersheds, training in wildlife management, and environmental education, also have been worthy of note. However, we have badly lagged behind in certain subject areas. We are totally lacking in environment impact assessment and cost-benefit analysis techniques and their application. Environmental quality standards as well as enforcement measures are also almost non-existent and an over-all look has never been taken. It is in these areas that we hope to be benefited to a great extent from the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. The Central Environmental Authority will no doubt undertake, at the very start, the systematization and definition of all these aspects which have to be handled with greater care and depth.

Before I conclude, let me reiterate on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, that Sri Lanka would undertake to extend all possible co-operation to the proposed programme. On behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, I must take this opportunity to thank the Governments of the South Asian countries and the Regional Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for the opportunity afforded to us to host this most important high level meeting as well as for the establishment of the Secretariat of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme in Colombo.

On behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, I wish all success to the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme.

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THE COLOMBO DECLARATION ON THE SOUTH ASIA
CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)

The Meeting of Ministers to Initiate the South Asia
Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

At Colombo on 25th February, 1981.

Having considered the report of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting convened at Bangalore, March, 1980,

Having further considered the report and recommendations of the Meeting of Officials to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) held at Colombo, 18-21 February 1981,

Noting the possibilities of the occurrence of severe ecological disequilibrium and the threat of environmental degradation in the Region,

Noting also the warm support of their countries in the aims and aspirations of the proposed Programme, as expressed at the foregoing meetings, in contacts among themselves and with UNEP, and the wealth of capability and expertise available within the Region,

Noting in addition the offer of the Government of Sri Lanka to provide the facilities for the Secretariat of SACEP, the offers of the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to serve as Focal Points for Programme development and implementation in selected subject areas, and the interest shown by the Governments of Bhutan, Burma, Maldives and Nepal,

Conscious of the readiness of their countries to co-operate and extend mutual assistance to each other in matters of environmental concern, to contribute through the application of their resources, to the work of the Focal Points and, in the case of Sri Lanka, to the Secretariat of SACEP,

Taking note

Taking note of the active interest and possibilities of support from various donor countries, international financing institutions, agencies and bodies,

Recognizing the pioneering nature of the proposed co-operative programme and the organizational arrangements thereto,

Commending the significant contribution and imaginative initiative of the Director of the Regional Office of UNEP as noted by the Bangalore Meeting and the Meeting of Officials at Colombo,

Appreciating the firm support and encouragement extended by the Executive Director of UNEP in this regard,

DECLARES:

1. Its decision to establish a co-operative programme to be known as the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme;
2. Its endorsement of the agreed institutional arrangements, the over-all programme content, and technical co-operation and the financing arrangements;
3. Its resolve to sustain, strengthen, and utilize to the fullest, for the benefit of the peoples of their countries, the agreed programme and the arrangements for its implementation;
4. Its intention to foster the Programme as essential for the promotion of human welfare, development and amelioration of poverty in the region;
5. Its commitment to work out a harmonious balance between the process of development and resources of nature;
6. Its conviction that this Programme and the co-operative arrangements thereto, could provide a valuable basis for mutual co-operation, in the fields of social and economic development;

/Calls upon:

Calls upon:

1. The interested donor states, international financing institutions, agencies and other bodies to extend their support readily and in imaginative and concrete terms, keeping in mind the importance of maintaining the momentum in implementing a Programme of such far-ranging significance;

2. The United Nations system, UNDP in particular and UNEP, to assist SACEP, as required, with financial support, technical assistance, information, and guidance in the implementation of the Programme;

3. The member states of the SACEP region to see in these a worthy cause with goals and objectives fully capable of attainment through their common perceptions, friendly co-operation and mutual assistance.

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ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION
OF THE
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

PREAMBLE

The members of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme;

In pursuance of the Colombo Declaration on the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme adopted by them at the Meeting of Ministers held at Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 23-25 February 1981,

Do hereby agree upon and adopt these Articles of Association for the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, hereinafter referred to as SACEP.

ARTICLE 1

AIMS AND FUNCTIONS

The aims of SACEP are:

- (a) To promote and support the protection, management and enhancement of the environment, both natural and human, of the countries of South Asia, individually, collectively and co-operatively;
- (b) To make judicious use of the resources of the environment towards removal of poverty, reduction of socio-economic disparity, improve the quality of life, and prosperity on a continuing basis;
- (c) For these purposes, to make the fullest use of the organizational arrangements and facilities for co-operation under SACEP.

The functions of SACEP are:

- (d) To promote co-operative activities in priority areas of environment of mutual interest;

(e) To ensure that these activities result in benefit individually or collectively to the Member States of the Region;

(f) To extend support as needed through exchange of knowledge and expertise available among the member countries;

(g) To provide local resources towards implementation of projects and activities; and

(h) To encourage maximum constructive and complementary support from interested donor countries and other sources.

ARTICLE 2

MEMBERSHIP

(a) The members of SACEP shall be those States of the South Asia region who participated at the Meeting referred to in the Preamble hereinbefore;

(b) Membership shall remain open to other States of the South Asia region invited to the Meeting, which have not been able to present, but which at any time later may accept these Articles;

(c) Any application for membership by a State under paragraph (b) above shall be circulated to members of the Governing Council, who shall thereafter notify such State of their admission to membership.

ARTICLE 3

ORGANS

The principal organs of SACEP are:

(a) The Governing Council hereinafter referred to as the Council;

(b) The Consultative Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Committee;

(c) The Secretariat;

(d) Such other subsidiary organs or bodies as may be found necessary at any time in accordance with a decision to such effect of the Governing Council.

/ARTICLE 4

ARTICLE 4

GOVERNING COUNCIL

- (a) The Council shall consist of all the members of SACEP;
- (b) Each member shall have one representative on the Council, who will normally be of Ministerial rank;
- (c) Unless otherwise agreed upon by members, the Council shall normally meet once a year. The quorum for a meeting of the Governing Council shall be a simple majority of the membership. The Presidency of the Governing Council shall be by rotation amongst the members in alphabetical order commencing with the host country; the Chairman shall hold office for a period of one year or till such time as the new Chairman takes office in that year;
- (d) The Council shall be the principal review and deliberative body of SACEP and shall be responsible for determining policy and programmes;
- (e) The Council may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of its Articles of Association;
- (f) The meetings of the Council shall proceed in a co-operative spirit, which is the key note of SACEP, and shall endeavour at all times to reach agreement by consensus;
- (g) The Governing Council may formulate its own rules of procedure.

ARTICLE 5

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

- (a) The Committee shall consist of representatives of Member States of SACEP; its headquarters shall be in Colombo where it will normally hold its sessions;
- (b) Each Member State shall meet the expenses of its representative for attendance at Committee sessions;

/(c)

(c) It shall be the responsibility of the Committee to facilitate implementation of the programmes and policies as determined by the Council through close informal co-operation and to promote the dissemination of information on the concepts and the operation of SACEP in general;

(d) At its first session, the Committee will elect a Chairman who will chair its sessions for not more than one term of one year from the date of election. For any period, during which the Chairman is absent from the country, or is otherwise prevented from exercising the functions of Chairman, the Council shall elect an Acting Chairman;

The Committee will submit a report on the action taken by the Committee to the next meeting of the Council;

(e) Six weeks notice shall be given of sessions. The notice shall in every case be accompanied by a provisional agenda. Any documents that may require reference to member Governments before discussion shall be issued not less than six weeks before the date of the session at which they will be discussed;

(f) A simple majority of the membership of SACEP shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of holding a Committee Session;

(g) The Committee shall endeavour to reach agreement by consensus after discussion in a co-operative spirit;

(h) The Committee may make such rules and regulations as it deems necessary in relation to Committee procedures and the operation and administration of the Secretariat, subject to the approval of the Governing Council.

ARTICLE 6

FOCAL POINTS

(a) There shall be Subject Area Focal Points which shall co-operate with SACEP Secretariat in programme implementation;

/ (b)

(b) Each country that has accepted responsibility for a particular subject area under this Programme shall identify an office within the country as the designated Focal Point for that subject area;

Where two or more countries are jointly responsible for a subject area, the Focal Point shall be identified in one of the countries concerned by mutual arrangement;

(c) Each Focal Point shall nominate an official to act as the Liaison Officer with the SACEP Secretariat;

(d) The Focal Point shall work towards the implementation of its programme and shall be entitled to assistance in such implementation, in its area of responsibility for the SACEP countries as a whole and will discharge this function in co-operation with the Secretariat;

(e) It shall be entitled to convene working group meetings, if necessary, in any of the co-operating countries to fulfil its obligations.

ARTICLE 7

SECRETARIAT

(a) The Secretariat shall consist of a Director, appointed for a period of three years and who shall be its head and a modest number of other international officers appointed by the Governing Council from among nominees of member Governments, as well as such supporting staff as may be recruited from time to time according to regulations laid down by the Consultative Committee;

(b) The Secretariat shall assist the Council, the Committee and the Focal Points in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities;

(c) The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff shall be the necessity to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. In the case of the international officers, due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting them on as

wide a geographical basis as possible from among the co-operating countries. The members of the Secretariat staff shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible to the SACEP Organization;

(d) The Director shall be the chief executive officer and shall act as Secretary to the meetings of the Council and the Committee and shall be co-ordinator of activities and programmes of SACEP. He shall submit periodic progress reports to the Committee and the Council;

(e) The Director of the Secretariat shall maintain close liaison with the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as with other organizations or countries not members of SACEP which are presently extending assistance within the region, or which may in the future decide to do so.

ARTICLE 8

BUDGET

(a) The Director shall submit for consideration and approval by the Council a budget showing estimated receipts and expenditure for every financial year, with an outline of anticipations for the subsequent year;

(b) Unless otherwise provided, the financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December of each year;

(c) The draft annual budget shall be submitted by the Director for consideration by the Council at a session not later than October of each year. Supplementary estimates of expenditures, when necessary, shall be submitted for Council approval at any other session;

(d) If by the end of any financial year, the Council shall have failed to pass the budget for the ensuing financial year, the appropriation for the preceding financial year shall be deemed re-voted and shall remain in force and effect until a new budget is adopted by the Council;

(e) The Director shall circulate to Council members a statement of income and expenditure and a balance sheet duly certified by the Council's Auditors as soon as possible after the close of every financial year;

(f) The Council shall make appropriate provision for the maintenance and audit of its accounts.

ARTICLE 9

HOST FACILITIES

(a) The host country of the Secretariat shall provide such hosting and support facilities for the Secretariat and the Director of SACEP as are needed, in particular:

- (i) Separate and distinctive offices for the Secretariat, and official residence for the Director; and
- (ii) Such other facilities as may be agreed upon from time to time between the host country and the Council;

(b) The countries assuming responsibility as Focal Points for subject areas shall provide such physical and other facilities as deemed adequate and necessary for the discharge of their functions;

(c) The host country of the Secretariat and the countries responsible for Focal Points, in so far as the latter use the services of international staff, shall accord such status, immunities, exemptions and privileges as are in conformity with accepted practice for such organs and as may specifically be agreed upon between the Council and the Member States.

ARTICLE 10

WORKING LANGUAGE

The working language of SACEP shall be English.

/ARTICLE 11

ARTICLE 11

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

(a) These Articles of Association shall be deemed to have come into force once they have been adopted at this meeting and ratified by at least three Member States;

(b) The original of the Articles of Association in a single copy in the English language shall be kept by the host State, who will act as the Depository;

The Depository shall send certified copies of this document to all member countries that have joined in the adoption of the Articles. The Depository shall also have this document registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations;

(c) Amendments to the Articles may be proposed by any member of SACEP. Such amendments shall come into force on being approved by a consensus at a meeting of the Governing Council;

(d) As soon as the Articles of Association have come into force, the Director of SACEP shall convene a meeting of the Committee which shall proceed forthwith to initiate the necessary organisational and programme activities envisaged.

*DONE AT COLOMBO THIS THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY OF FEBRUARY
ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY ONE.*

AFGHANISTAN
BANGLADESH
INDIA
IRAN
MALDIVES
PAKISTAN
SRI LANKA

part two

R E P O R T

OF THE

HIGH LEVEL MEETING OF OFFICIALS

OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES

TO INITIATE THE

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

(S A C E P)

18-21 FEBRUARY 1981

BNICH, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

REPORT OF THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING OF OFFICIALS
OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES TO INITIATE THE
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)

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APPENDICES

- I. *List of Participants*
- II. *Agenda*
- III. *Inaugural Address by the Deputy Minister for
Local Government, Housing and Construction*
- IV. *Statement by the Director Regional Office
and Regional Representative for Asia and
the Pacific*
- V. *Statement by the Resident Representative of
the United Nations Development Programme
in Sri Lanka and the Maldives*

.....

1. Introduction

The High Level Meeting of Officials of South Asian Countries to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was convened in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 18-21 February 1981, in pursuance of the recommendation made by the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting which was convened by UNEP, held in Bangalore, India, 10-15 March 1980.

The purpose of the Meeting was to finalize and launch the programme and co-operative arrangements made thereto, including the adoption of Articles of Association and a Declaration or Convention.

2. Attendance and organization of work

Attendance

The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following member countries, viz. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Government of Nepal had conveyed its intention to participate, but could not be present in time for the Officials' Meeting.

A representative from Sweden also attended as an observer.

The following representatives from United Nations agencies and bodies participated: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), ESCAP/Regional Centre for Technology Transfer (RCTT), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO). The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) also participated.

The list of participants is given at Appendix I.

Election of officers

The Meeting elected Mr. K.H.J. Wijayadasa, Leader of the Sri Lanka delegation as Chairman and Dr. Abdul Samad Abdullah, Leader of the Maldivian delegation as Vice-Chairman, Mr. M.C.K. Swamy, Member-Secretary of the Indian delegation as Rapporteur.

/Drafting

Drafting Committee

The Meeting constituted itself as a Drafting Committee for finalizing its draft report.

It was agreed that the report should be brief, with emphasis on conclusions and decisions for action.

Credentials

As agreed, the credentials of the delegations were examined by an *Ad hoc* Committee consisting of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Meeting and declared to be in order.

3. Adoption of agenda

The agenda as adopted is attached at Appendix II.

4. Inauguration

(a) Inaugural address

The Meeting was inaugurated by the Honourable Deputy Minister of Local Government, Housing and Construction, Government of Sri Lanka, Mr. P.C. Imbulana. In his address, he stated that the primary objective of the new programme was the improvement of the quality of life in the South Asian region. He said that the launching of the programme would give an impetus to national programmes on the environment in South Asian countries where development, for the eradication of poverty, had to be vigorously pursued. Industrialization and urbanization had produced specific difficulties and environmental planning and management had become of paramount importance. He was sure that SACEP, being launched with assistance and encouragement from the United Nations Environment Programme would play a leading role in this endeavour. A copy of his address is at Appendix III.

(b) Statements

Mr. C. Suriyakumaran, Director Regional Office and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, UNRP, in his opening statement, stated that the Meeting had shown a deep awareness among the participating countries of the fundamental nature and significance of environmental resource management for development itself. He expressed the hope that even at the initial stage of its establishment SACEP will receive substantial funding assistance from interested donor countries and the two major development financing institutions, the World Bank (IBRD) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He invited them to look upon SACEP programmes as essential component of their own priorities in development financing. He revealed that UNDP had already indicated its willingness to extend support to SACEP. The full text of his statement is at Appendix IV.

Mr. Y.Y. Kim, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme in Sri Lanka and the Maldives, in his statement said that it was UNDP's policy, primarily to support countries' own efforts and expressed the keen interest of UNDP in the formation of SACEP which in essence was an effort by the countries themselves, in the first instance, to solve their environmental problems, through co-operative endeavour. He said that UNDP had already indicated its willingness to examine specific programme components for support and that a suitable provision for this programme was being included in the Inter-country Programme for Asia and the Pacific for the next quinquennium. A copy of his statement is at Appendix V.

6. Institutional matters

(a) Articles of Association (UNEP/SACEP/HIM/BP/I - Part A)

The Meeting considered the Articles of Association, on the basis of clause by clause discussion and modified it suitably.

The version of the Articles as adopted is at Appendix VIII of Part I.

/(b)

(b) Formulation of guidelines for preparation and submission of projects and activities under SACEP (UNEP/SACEP/HLM/BP/I - Part B)

While agreeing on the necessity for some degree of standardization of format for project submissions, the Meeting noted that the guidelines offered were also considered as flexible to be tailored to meet subsequent requirements as they arose. Provision may also be made for monitoring mid-term reviews and evaluation in preparing projects.

The Consultative Committee shall facilitate the implementation of the programmes through close informal co-operation and promote the dissemination of information on the concept and the operation of SACEP.

The Committee would, on behalf of the Governing Council and Secretariat, if necessary, provide any advice in the matter.

(c) Endorsement of focal points identified at the Bangalore Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting and appointment of focal points for subject areas as needed

The Meeting endorsed the appointment of Focal Points identified at the Bangalore Meeting and also accepted the offer made by India to be the Focal Point for Social Forestry. Regarding those Subject Areas for which there were as yet no Focal Points, the Meeting decided that these may be identified in due course, on the basis of offers expected to be received. The special position in regard to Desertification and Regional Seas Programme was noted, as those were served by two United Nations sponsored global programmes.

The Maldivian delegate expressed a wish to collaborate with the Focal Point Bangladesh in the Subject Area of Island Ecosystems.

d. Programme matters: Identification and adoption of programme priorities (UNEP/SACEP/HLM/BP/II)

It was understood that the task of the Meeting in respect of programme matters was to provide broad policy guidance and decisions on the general directions of work and, on that basis to identify selected priority items within each Subject Area for implementation by

/the

the Focal Points and the SACEP Secretariat. In keeping with this decision and of the earlier decision to have the report concise and with emphasis on conclusions, it was agreed that, in each of these Subject Areas below, this report would concentrate on a record of selected action programmes in each of the Subject Areas. It was recognized that their implementation should be undertaken in keeping with available resources and, as needed, in stages. The different Subject Areas dealt within the above document were discussed *seriatim*, in the background of the conclusions on these matters at the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting at Bangalore referred to earlier in this report.

(a) Environment management

(i) Environmental impact assessment and cost/benefit analysis; environment and development - focal Point: Sri Lanka

This particular Subject Area had wide ranging importance in all aspects of the environment, as well as for effectively establishing environment management in a developing context. In the area of environment assessment, while considerable work has taken place in a few countries, the subject of environment and development planning was still being evolved, but with little established methodology. The need for environment management exists as much due to the effects of development as to the effects of lack of development or lack of effective institutional arrangements for development. A sound approach to environment involved, therefore, management, utilization and development of environment resources. This also applies to uses of environmental resources along with sustained maintenance for future resource use and posterity. The purpose of environment management was to be conceived in a holistic sense, namely as serving the needs of man as well as ecological stability.

The following programme priorities in this Subject Area were decided upon:

/Under

Under environment assessment,

- (1) Assistance in promoting the concept of environmental assessment and of environmental development.
- (2) Dissemination of information of available methodology from both developing and developed country situations and evaluation for possible applicability in the countries.
- (3) Promotion of the tools and techniques for environment assessment as are useful and relevant to developing countries, including the role of monitoring.
- (4) Refinement of the environment assessment methodology through selected case studies, taken from different ecosystem situations among the SACEP countries.

Under environment and development planning,

- (5) Setting up of selected field laboratory exercises illustrative of one or more of the major resources management aspects in the region, including questions of soil-water-plant relationship to development, alternative projects to achieve given production goals, and the like.
- (6) Identification of interested universities/institutes in the SACEP region towards establishing a joint research project on integrated economic and environment development planning.

It was envisaged that with the establishment of the National Environment Authority in Sri Lanka shortly, the foregoing action programmes would be taken up by that Authority on behalf of SACEP for due implementation.

(ii) Environmental quality standards - Poal Point: Irvn

The Meeting considered the establishment of standards relevant to their situation as developing countries. It saw this as a responsibility with important ramifications in all sectors of economic and social activity. The following programme priorities were identified under this Subject Area:

/(1)

(1) The first task was to identify environmental quality standards in the various sectors and categories of relevance to the SACEP countries, based on careful prior survey and monitoring, as well as use of existing manuals and references, such as that of ISI. It was agreed that in order to achieve this, countries should be allowed time, in advance of any group meeting that may be convened for the purpose, to prepare the information on the situation and needs in their own countries. It was also agreed that after such a meeting relating to the identification of a set of quality standards, countries would make efforts to check these for comprehensiveness and applicability to their situations.

(2) Following on the foregoing steps, the programme should evolve cheaper and simpler instrumentation appropriate to developing country situation, in agriculture, in industry, and in human settlements.

(3) Based on the progress with instrumentation, designs of such instruments suitable for use in the SACEP countries should be established in consultation with the countries.

(4) As a final step and as a co-operative venture with as many SACEP countries as possible participating, a programme for manufacture of these instruments, centrally or as components, should be initiated.

(iii) Technology for development of renewable and reusable resources
- Focal Point: ESCAP/RCTT (UN/ESCAP/Regional Centre for
Technology Transfer, Bangalore, India)

The Meeting considered the development and transfer of technologies for the utilization of renewable and reusable resources, comprising a wide variety of materials -- viz. agricultural wastes, forest wastes, wastes generated in industry, fish processing and in human settlement -- as of great importance. They combine prevention of pollution with creation of wealth. The Meeting identified the following priority steps to be undertaken in this area:

(1) The joint efforts mounted by ESCAP, RCTT and the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Environment Programme should be continued.

(2) The Focal Point, RCTT, should undertake a survey of available and needed technologies for converting into useful wealth and energy, major agricultural, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery wastes in SACEP countries and disseminate the information obtained as widely as possible among research institutions, laboratories and other centres of excellence in the SACEP countries.

(3) The SACEP Secretariat and the Focal Points should assist the countries to set up pilot plants to demonstrate the viabilities of proven technologies. A target of at least one pilot project in each country may be aimed at.

(iv) Environmental legislation - Focal Point: India

The Meeting noted that while, in many countries, a wide range of laws existed, covering many aspects of environmental management, there were at the same time important gaps. Also, in many cases existing legislation was mostly regulatory in character, rather than of a production related nature, with emphasis on resource as opposed to pollution treatment. Several countries had legislative items on the anvil to fill such lacunae; and in some cases to bring the large numbers of existing laws under one environmental umbrella. While it was not possible or desirable to attempt to achieve any uniformity in this matter, the countries could benefit from information and advice. The Meeting felt that:

(1) As a first step, the Focal Point may undertake a survey of the existing and contemplated legislation in the countries and disseminate the results among countries who may be able to benefit from already existing models in other countries.

(2) The SACEP Secretariat may actively assist the Focal Point in fostering a network of legal institutions that may become readily available as sources of expertise in various legislative fields related to environment.

/(b)

(b) Management of natural resources

(i) Conservation of montane ecosystems and watersheds - Focal Point: Pakistan

The Meeting agreed that the conservation of the montane ecosystem should be given high priority due to the immediate needs; for example, the potential benefits to 1,000 million people estimated to inhabit the Himalayan region by the year 2000. Concern was expressed over the present management techniques and exploitation of mountains and watershed areas. To be successful, an integrated approach was needed and should draw upon public participation for common social causes. Any new programme under SACEP should also be linked with the existing activities of UNESCO which included the establishment of an International Centre on Mountain Ecosystem, regional seismological programmes, meteorological and hydrological studies of the Himalayas range and the ice and snow hydrology programme. SACEP could also well reflect the World Conservation Strategy prepared and launched in 1980 by IUCN with assistance of UNEP.

SACEP Secretariat, together with the identified Focal Point may disseminate all available information on the following:

(1) Management plans prepared at national level for montane ecosystem and watersheds. It was envisaged that such activity would lead towards comprehensive co-operation on the Himalayan ecosystem drawing upon both regional and other resources.

(2) In close co-operation with UNESCO, the carrying capacity of crucial and representative montane ecosystems and watersheds of the region should be assessed.

(3) Depending upon the physical and financial capabilities of the SACEP Secretariat, selected pilot plans for conservation practices should be implemented. This might include ecosystem stabilization practices such as rotational grazing for fodder production and control in mountain areas.

(4) In co-operation with UNESCO, a recurrent manpower training programme may be established to ensure the availability of expertise in the region necessary for sound mountain and watershed ecosystem management.

(ii) Social forestry - Focal Point: India ^{/}*

In recent years, this issue had received greater attention in South Asian countries. Social forestry was prescribed as a sustainable source of rural energy supply. It was also proved to be of value in generating community involvement and mass participation. Based on the experiments being undertaken in the region, there were sufficient success cases to confirm the benefits of such a programme.

The Meeting agreed that technical co-operation among countries of South Asia on this Subject Area should emphasize the following:

(1) As a first step, pilot social forestry projects to demonstrate the related appropriate technology and the tree species most suitable to local conditions should be identified.

(2) A technology exchange programme including seeds and seedlings supply among member countries of SACEP should be developed.

(3) Technical visits for scientists and technical personnel should be arranged to successful social forestry project areas in the region to encourage the promotion of new social forestry programmes.

(4) In order to optimize benefits to be derived from social forestry, demonstrative pilot projects on utilization of resources generated from such a programme should be promoted.

(iii) Regional co-operation in wildlife and genetic resources conservation - Focal Point: Iran

The Meeting endorsed the views expressed earlier in the Bangalore Meeting on the importance of conserving endangered species of wild fauna and flora of South Asia.

/The SACEP

^{*/} Altered, on request, to Afghanistan at the Meeting of Ministers.

The SACEP Secretariat might assist countries in:

- (1) Preparation of maps of existing and proposed biosphere reserves under the MAB programme which was being promoted by UNESCO/UNEP.
- (2) Preparation of a selected list of animal and bird species in which consultancy and initial breeding stock were required.
- (3) Propagation of endangered species in captivity and their rehabilitation in the wild including the exchange of information and know-how among established centres in countries.
- (4) Establishment of a network of concerned governmental agencies on the conservation of wildlife and genetic resources. Regular contacts among these identified institutes should be encouraged. Important international conventions, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the exploration of the need for and possibility of a regional convention for nature conservation should be supported.
- (iv) Conservation of corals, mangroves, deltas, coastal areas
- Focal Point: Bangladesh
- (v) Island ecosystems - Focal Point: Bangladesh (in co-operation
with Maldives) */

The importance of these two Subject Areas was well-recognized. Concern was expressed over the prevailing exploitation of mangroves and indiscriminate coral mining. The Meeting emphasized the significance of mangroves in protecting coastal erosion, in mitigating adverse impacts of natural disasters such as from cyclones, and in serving as habitat for the conservation of living marine environment. The Meeting also advocated proper coastal area development including mangroves reforestation and the conservation of important marine environments through the establishment of marine national parks for endangered species such as dugong and sea turtles.

/Based

*/ To be confirmed.

Based upon programmes and projects in existence in South Asian countries, including the IBRD capital investment programmes on mangroves, the designated Focal Point, in co-operation with the SACEP Secretariat, should undertake the following:

Under (b) (iv),

(1) Guidelines for preparation of a regional plan for the establishment of marine national parks with special regard to those ecosystems which are unique and threatened, and those that are repositories and breeding grounds of living marine resources.

(2) Preparation of a plan of action for the rehabilitation and propagation of mangroves.

(3) A programme of exchange of information and expertise among countries of the region, probably through the establishment of a network of institutions that have expertise in the area.

(4) Identification of select pilot projects on the conservation of corals, mangroves, deltas and coastal areas, for concentrated priority action.

Under (b) (v),

(5) Identification of significant oceanic islands for comprehensive and integrated scientific, ecology and demographic studies, including such islands where work has already commenced.

(6) Preparation of management plans for pilot island development with the objective of sharing the experience to be gained from such an exercise among countries of the region.

(vi) Tourism and environment - Focal Point: not decided

Tourism was regarded as a major foreign exchange earner and an emerging industry in the region. However, it was vital that the development of tourism should be well-guided. Uncontrolled tourism could cause adverse impact to cultural values, life styles and even economic well-being of developing countries. Fragile ecosystems,

/sanctuaries,

sanctuaries, and national heritage areas needed protection. Tourism development also needed to take into account its linkage with urban planning and coastal zone management. Based on experience in the region, environmental legislation could be successfully used as a tool to promote healthy development of tourism. It was suggested that comparative studies should be undertaken on governmental policy in regard to the role of tourism in national development and its impact on the environment. The Meeting took note of the related activities being implemented or developed by WTO, ESCAP, ILO and supported by UNDP and UNEP.

The Meeting agreed that the following activities should be given priority:

(1) Each country may select one area of tourist potential or tourist abuse, for pilot studies on environmental impacts of tourism.

(2) On the basis of these, preparation of model management plans reflecting development and environmental imperatives as an integral part of area and national development planning would be attempted.

(3) As a later phase, preparation of guidelines for appropriate management of tourist areas from an environmental standpoint would be developed, for use as part of comprehensive tourism development.

(c) <u>Desertification</u>)	
)	
and)	Focal Point: None
)	
(d) <u>Regional Seas Programme</u>)	

The Meeting recognized that these two Subject Areas had a global foundation, being pursued vigorously by UNEP in co-operation with specialized agencies of the United Nations and other bodies. The Meeting emphasized the increasing threat to the marine environment from oil pollution arising from oil transportation by tankers. This

/Subject

Subject Area was regarded as also related to the international issue of exclusive oceanic zones under the purview of the Law of the Sea Conference. The Regional Seas Programme should be comprehensive in scope covering the areas of scientific research on resources management and pollution control.

The Meeting agreed that:

- SACEP Secretariat and the countries should, under these two Subject Areas, identify their needs and participate actively in the on-going global programmes.

(a) Energy and environment - Focal Point: Iran (in co-operation with Pakistan and India)

Energy was regarded as a matter of survival. Solutions to the energy crisis would also contribute to future economic and ecological stability. With limited resources available in each developing country of the region, it would be beneficial to all to pool their resources in supporting joint programmes on energy development. SACEP's role was thus an apt one.

It was recognized that various international and national agencies were already involved in different aspects of energy. Although energy conservation measures and more efficient utilization of energy were accepted as part of a programme advocated, it was recognized that there were indisputable needs for developing alternative sources of energy -- of both small and large type, from varying sources, and in a scale that could match future needs. Energy planning and energy conservation were recognized as an inherent dimension in national development and environmental planning.

A. All-out effort should be made regarding the technology and development for alternative sources of energy and evaluation of these implications to environment and development. In this regard, in so far as it related to technology development, the already existing channels like the Asian Working Group on Energy and Commonwealth Programmes on Development of Alternative Sources of Energy (CWO GREEN) could be utilized by the SACEP countries for undertaking the following:

- (1) Establishment of a meteorological network of solar radiation monitoring.
- (2) Preparation of a Renewable Energy Sources Atlas.
- (3) Development of a network of institutes working on solar cookers, solar stills, solar drying, solar cells, multi-energy pumping.
- (4) Undertaking of national surveys of hot water needed in industry and other uses.
- (5) Promotion of construction designs carrying 'passive' systems of energy tapping.
- (6) Utilization of the energy resource of wind and the sea.

In this regard, the efforts of other United Nations agencies such as ESCAP/ECTT, which has brought out a roster of Experts in Solar Energy in the region was also noted.

B. It was agreed that in relation to the implications of alternative sources of energy use, energy planning and energy preservation, the following activities could be promoted:

- (7) Establishment in each participating country of a "coupled"-agro and/or "energy-plantation" project as relevant.
- (8) Establishment of demonstration projects in village and/or towns under different climate zones of integrated energy systems as appropriate utilizing local resources and local participation with the ultimate aim of local fabrication of components.
- (9) On the long-term approach but as an immediate step, promotion of a network of institutions to undertake large scale solar energy research in co-operation with other international agencies.
- (10) Preparation of a plan of action for fabrication of related machinery and components, including their marketing.
- (11) Preparation of a set of "National Integrated Energy Strategies for Year 2000", including suggestions for steps in implementation.

(f) Education and training

(i) Environmental education and training - Pool Point: India

The Meeting considered that although in several countries aspects of environmental education and training had been receiving attention, in co-operation with international agencies and bodies such as UNESCO, UNICEF and ILO, it was necessary to ensure that the action programmes undertaken were on a clearly defined order of priorities, aimed at ensuring that environmental awareness was created at all levels, in the quickest possible time, and that the resources applied were utilized with optimum effectiveness. The Meeting considered that the priorities of activities may be:

- (1) Formal school education.
- (2) Preparation of environmental 'educators', including the development of integrated environment education programmes.
- (3) Out-of-school education, including maximum promotion of awareness.

Formal school education would include all levels (a) young children of about 5-13 years of age, (b) secondary and higher secondary schools and (c) university and college, graduate as well as post-graduate. While these areas would constitute pillars, immediate awareness had to be sought by various programmes, ranging from posters and folk activities to lunch time training programmes for urban or working class groups were noted.

(4) Further, vocational environmental education was important, particularly as the challenges in resource management and resource utilization required promotion of programmes of education for future needs, increases of renewable resources in large scale, for economic and environmental development.

(5) Finally, a target group to be aimed at was the set of decision makers in a society.

It was decided that SACEP programmes in this Area be developed around the foregoing five activity 'clusters'.

(ii) Training in wildlife management - Focal Point: India

The Meeting noted that although there was, as yet, no international institution for this purpose in the SACEP region, India had plans that should result in the establishment of a national institution for wildlife research, training and management which was expected to be set up next year, also for trainees from other countries.

The Meeting considered that the Focal Point and SACEP Secretariat may arrange for the countries to take advantage of this facility, when it is established.

7. Financial and technical co-operation (UNEP/SACEP/HLM/BP/III)

(a) Institutional support to Co-ordinating Committee and Subject Area Focal Points, in

- (i) national currencies of SACEP countries;
- (ii) international currencies.

(b) Programme support to Co-ordinating Committee and Focal Points, in

- (i) national currencies of SACEP countries;
- (ii) international currencies.

The Meeting took note of the tentative estimates presented in the background paper and noted that this was merely illustrative of the kind of financial provision that may be expected to be required. In the absence of actual programmes as yet, it was difficult to be more precise, but the presentation provided some picture of the order of the basic needs of funds in convertible and non-convertible currencies and, in the case of Sri Lanka, the order of their contribution as host country to SACEP Secretariat. The Meeting noted that funding institutions are increasingly reluctant to provide institutional support and hence requests for funds, outside of general SACEP country contributions, would be normally related to programmes. There were positive indications of support from UNDP and informally

/from

from certain donor country sources. One of the constituent elements in the latter source that had been explored was the idea of contributing modest trust funds to SACEP Secretariat whose annual proceeds would then be available, on a continuing basis, for essential SACEP purposes.

The Meeting also took note that the Secretariat may at a later stage prepare a Budget on the basis of the approved Articles of Association by making an assessment of country contributions, international agency contributions and other contributions by donor countries, etc.

8. Draft Declaration on Establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

The Meeting considered a draft of a Declaration on Establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) and decided to submit it to the Meeting of Ministers for adoption.

A copy of the Declaration as adopted at the Ministers' Meeting is at Appendix VII of Part I.

9. Other matters

The Meeting discussed the appointment of a Director and Deputy Director for the SACEP Secretariat. Regarding the appointment of the Director, it was decided to keep the matter for further consideration by the Meeting of Ministers.

Regarding the appointment of the Deputy Director, it was agreed that a Deputy Director be not appointed at this stage in keeping with the aim of being a modest Secretariat.

The Meeting also decided that, in order to carry forward the activities of SACEP without delay, a *pro tem* Director, nominated by the Government of Sri Lanka, may be appointed immediately. The *pro tem* Director shall act under the direction of the Consultative Committee and do everything necessary towards getting a regular Director into position as early as possible.

10. Adoption of report and closure of meeting

The Meeting unanimously adopted the draft report as amended after discussion.

The Meeting also unanimously adopted a vote of thanks to the Government and people of Sri Lanka for the excellent arrangements made.

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APPENDIX I

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME:
SECRETARIAT

High Level Meeting to Initiate the
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

18-25 February 1981
Colombo, Sri Lanka

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

(Officials' Meeting, 18-21 February 1981)

SACEP MEMBERS

AFGHANISTAN

*Mr. Esmatulla Wali, Director (Country & Town Planning), State
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*Mr. M.A. Karim, Director, Environment Pollution Control Department
Mr. Toufic Ali, Counsellor, Bangladesh High Commission in Sri Lanka*

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*Mr. N.D. Jayal, Joint Secretary, Department of Environment
Dr. R.K. Dixit, Director, Legal Treaties Division, Ministry of
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Mr. M.C.K. Sanyal, Senior Environmental Officer, Department of
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IRAN

*Mr. Jafar Azarngin, Charge d'Affaires a.i., Embassy of Iran in
Sri Lanka*

MALDIVES

*Dr. Abdul Samad Abdullah, Director, National Health Services,
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*Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, Charge d'Affaires for the Maldives for Sri
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PAKISTAN

*Mr. Mohammed Wailulla Khan Khaishgi, Ambassador for Pakistan in
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*Mr. Shamsul Haq, Deputy Secretary, Environment and Urban Affairs
Division, Ministry of Housing and Works*

Mr. Abdur Rauf Mullah, Minister, Embassy of Pakistan in Sri Lanka

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*Mr. K.B.J. Wijayadasa, Acting Secretary, Ministry of Local Government,
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*Mr. I. Samarawickrama, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Lands and
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*Mr. D.B.J. Abeygunasekara, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agricultural
Development and Research*

*Mr. Y.M.W. Bandara, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agricultural
Development and Research (as alternate to Mr. Abeygunasekara)*

Mr. Aloy Fernando, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries

Mr. Charitha Ratwatte, Chairman, National Youth Services Council

Dr. Leslie Herath, Chairman, Water Resources Board

Mr. Merrick Perera, Director of National Planning

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/...

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Mr. W.B. Selvanayagam, Deputy Director, Ministry of Plan Implementation

Mr. A. Kummingara, Prime Minister's Office

Mr. G.P. Jayasinghe, Deputy Director of Merchant Shipping

Dr. E.E. Jayaraja, Deputy Director, Ceylon Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research

Mr. A.D.R. Ratnamaja, Assistant Conservator of Forests

Mr. Siri Gunasekara, Soil Conservation Officer

Mr. C.V. Jayawardena, Assistant Director, Wildlife Conservation

Mr. A.L. Jayasuriya, Secretary, Ceylon Tourist Board

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**Regional Centre for Technology
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*Mr. C.V.S. Ratnam, Counterpart
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**United Nations Development
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*Mr. Y.Y. Kim, Resident Representative
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Miss D.B. Brohier, Programme Officer

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World Tourism Organization (WTO)

*Mr. R. Thiruvendaz, Programme Officer,
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GUEST OF THE SECRETARIAT

Marga Institute

*Mr. Thilak Abeystrigunawardena,
Research Officer*

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APPENDIX II

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME:
SECRETARIAT

High Level Meeting to Initiate the
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

18-25 February 1981
Colombo, Sri Lanka

AGENDA

(Officials' Meeting, 18-21 February 1981)

1. Opening of meeting
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Institutional matters:
 - (a) Formulation of Articles of Association, Modalities and functions of the Co-ordinating Committee and Focal Points
/Background Paper UNEP/SACEP/HLM/BP/I - Part A/
 - (b) Formulation of guidelines for preparation and submission of projects and activities under SACEP
/Background Paper UNEP/SACEP/HLM/BP/I - Part B/
 - (c) Endorsement of Focal Points identified at the Bangalore Intergovernmental Meeting, and appointment of Focal Points for Subject Areas as needed
5. Programme matters: Identification and adoption of programme priorities
 - (a) Environment management
 - (i) Environmental impact assessment and cost/benefit analysis; environment and development;
 - (ii) Environmental quality standards;
 - (iii) Technology for development of renewable and reusable resources, 1/
 - (iv) Environmental legislation

/ (b)

1/ Appeared under the title "Residue Utilization" at the Bangalore Meeting.

(b) Management of natural resources

- (i) Conservation of montane ecosystems and watersheds;
- (ii) Social forestry;
- (iii) Regional co-operation in wildlife and genetic resources ^{2/} conservation;
- (iv) Conservation of corals, mangroves, delta and coastal areas;
- (v) Island ecosystem conservation;
- (vi) Tourism and the environment

(c) Desertification

(d) Regional Seas Programme

(e) Energy and the environment

(f) Education and training

- (i) Environmental education and training;
- (ii) Training in wildlife management

[Background Paper UNEP/SACEP/HIM/BP/II]

6. Financial and technical co-operation:

(a) Institutional support to Co-ordinating Committee and Subject Area Focal Points, in

- (i) national currencies of SACEP countries;
- (ii) international currencies

(b) Programme support to Co-ordinating Committee and Focal Points, in

- (i) national currencies of SACEP countries;
- (ii) international currencies

[Background Paper UNEP/SACEP/HIM/BP/III]

7. Consideration of Draft Declaration on Establishment of SACEP

8. Other matters

9. Adoption of report and closure of meeting

^{2/} The phrase "genetic resources" is a suggested addition by the Secretariat to the original wording, in order to reflect the view of wildlife as encompassing natural biota and not confined to fauna alone.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY HON. P.C. IMBULANA,
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION

I am deeply honoured that the organizers of this High Level Meeting, have invited me to deliver the opening address. This is undoubtedly a historic occasion, when Senior Officials from ten South Asian countries have gathered here to undertake the preliminary work for the establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, which would be formally initiated next week at the Ministers' Meeting.

In the first place, I must thank the Governments of South Asian countries as well as the Regional Director of the United Nations Environment Programme in Bangkok for giving us in Sri Lanka, an opportunity to host this important and crucial meeting. We have, to the best of our ability, attempted to make your short stay in this country happy and memorable. However, I wish to request you to pardon us, during the next few days, for any shortcomings in the organization of this Meeting.

As you know, the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme in 1972, brought to a climax, the global concern for the human environment. I have no doubt, that the launching of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, would give an impetus to national programmes on the environment, undertaken by our countries under the general guidance of the United Nations Environment Programme and its Regional Office. Essentially, the primary objective of this new programme would be to assist with development towards the improvement of life in the South Asian region. At the practical level, this programme will provide various kinds of support for the member countries to organize rational and efficient use of resources without destroying them. Such an approach to resources is specially relevant to South Asia, where development has to be vigorously pursued in order to rise above poverty which plagues many of our nations.

Environmental management is a fundamental problem of both industrialized as well as developing countries. Industrialization and the heavy concentration of people in the urban regions have produced specific difficulties which were unknown to our forefathers to this extent.

In the old agrarian societies of our countries with their annual cycles of sowing, growth and harvests, the harmony of nature and human beings was maintained. But through the process of industrialization, population growth and urbanization, the harmony is increasingly disturbed and is replaced by a system of imbalance which affects the existing order and damages the balanced relationship between nature and economic development.

Since the middle of the last century this growing disharmony can be observed within the industrialized countries mainly in Western Europe and the United States of America. Pollution and contamination combined with destruction of the ecological equilibrium can now be observed as an additional problem of the countries of the so-called third world.

In this context, environmental management has to be a part of the struggle for a new economic order and environmental planning has to be an integral part of development and planning as a whole. Our countries should make maximum use of national resources to overcome production shortages to meet the basic needs of their people. On the other hand, countries with agrarian based economies on the road to industrialization should not commit the same mistake made by the industrialized nations in the past by blindly following their strategies.

Our planet earth, as far as we know, provides the only environment in which our kind of life is possible. Without any effort on our part, we have inherited a wide range of resources which are essential to our life. We can recognize air, water, land, living things, and inanimate features as resources which jointly

/constitute

constitute this unique environment which provides for all our needs. Our responsibility is to accept them without destroying them. Therefore, both at the global and national levels, we need our own laws and regulations, sound management procedures based on accurate information and experience, and effective institutions to assure rational use and management of the resources. This need is acute for developing South Asia.

Distinguished delegates, it is a happy augury, that an opportunity has been provided to us in South Asia for the establishment of a co-operative effort for the management of our environment. Ours is a part of the world with a very ancient history and a culture - perhaps as ancient as the environment. Therefore, I have no doubt, that our meeting which starts today will provide the basis for a very fruitful and meaningful attempt to launch a co-operative effort in the management and the protection of our environment for our benefit as well as for the benefits of generations yet to be born.

With this few words, I take great pleasure in inaugurating this Meeting.

Thank you.

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STATEMENT BY MR. C. SURIYAKUMARAN,
DIRECTOR REGIONAL OFFICE AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC,
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

I am most happy to welcome you, on behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and myself, on this auspicious occasion. I thank the Deputy Minister most sincerely both for the time that he has given us and for the very concrete and business-like start he has given to the proceedings of this Meeting.

As you know, at the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting on the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme held in Bangalore, India, 10-15 March 1980, it was decided that a High Level Meeting should be held in order to finalize and launch this programme and the co-operative arrangements made thereto, including the adoption of articles of association and a declaration or convention. The provisional agenda that is before you is, thus, in keeping with the matters identified for your meeting by that Intergovernmental Expert Group.

At that Meeting four countries could not participate due to unavoidable reasons. Three of them specifically conveyed their support to the Meeting and wished to be associated in the follow up to it. Subsequent to that Meeting, therefore, a mission composed of its Chairman and Leader of the Sri Lanka delegation, along with the UNEP secretariat member, visited the four countries, in order to brief them, as well as to reflect their suggestions and ideas in the preparations for the present High Level Meeting. Needless to say, we are all happy that these arrangements and preparations have led to a successful culmination, which has made possible our being here.

There have, indeed, been very sound reasons for such a culmination, based on deep awareness of the fundamental nature and significance of environmental resource management in our countries for development itself and, through it, for human welfare. This

type of background was evident, very much in fact, during the Bangalore Meeting, as the motive force of the deliberations and conclusions; and of the enduring spirit of co-operation that developed out of it.

The Officials' Meeting is a preparation for the Ministerial Meeting which is due to start next week. It is, therefore, apt and in keeping with its spirit and purpose, that this Meeting should expect to proceed with its tasks expeditiously and with least formality. The Ministers' Meeting, when it convenes, will look forward to your clear and concise recommendations, which I have no doubt you will provide.

I am particularly grateful for the high level of the representation at this Meeting and we all feel that it constitutes already an assurance of its success. We are similarly pleased to see the representation from the interested potential co-operating countries and other bodies that are here today as well as from the specialized agencies of the United Nations system. Some have been unavoidably absent and have, therefore, conveyed their interest, wishing also to be kept informed of the outcome. It was firmly hoped at the Bangalore Meeting that positive assistance and support would be forthcoming from interested countries and bodies; it was also foreseen that, from now on, the specialized agencies would have an essential role in assisting the countries in formulation and implementation of various programmes and activities as may be decided upon.

At this moment, I shall be thankful for your indulgence to enable me to make some brief observations on the proposed agenda items of this Meeting as before you. They are not unknown to you and they have, indeed, been reflected in the Bangalore discussions; and, therefore, my intention is to draw attention to some of them from the point of view of the Ministerial Meeting. Perhaps, one may say that a final outcome, out of discussions of the substantive aspects of the agenda, should be to provide (i) a needed institutional basis, (ii) over-all agreement on the nature of the programmes and (iii) clearcut arrangements on financing and technical co-operation.

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Under the first, one may recall the recommendation and decision of the Bangalore Meeting to establish a Co-ordinating Committee, subject area Focal Points and a modest SACEP Secretariat. Specifically, the Bangalore Meeting agreed to establish SACEP; accepted the offer of Sri Lanka to provide facilities for the Secretariat; and identified Focal Points for the majority of the subject areas. That Meeting also set out brief guidelines concerning the SACEP Secretariat and Focal Points. The institutional bases which the High Level Meeting was to provide were considered simply as setting out essential ground rules for any such activity, with the paramount emphasis in SACEP on the idea of functioning and working together in a co-operative spirit.

On the second, namely programme matters, this Meeting needs to provide policy guidance and to select a limited number of priority activities within each subject area. In keeping with the intended practical orientation of SACEP, the priority activities so identified should be concrete, development related, and severally or together, beneficial to all the countries. The outlining of programme activities in detail and their follow up would be a latter matter, for the SACEP Secretariat and Focal Points concerned.

On the third matter, of financial and technical co-operation, perhaps the first thing to note - and here I address myself as much to the prospective donor countries and institutions - is that the SACEP countries for their part, have already given attention to their responsibilities under self-help financing. The Bangalore Meeting agreed that all countries of the South Asia region would extend their help to SACEP. The *pro tem* Secretariat and at least one or two of the designated Focal Points have undertaken certain preliminary tasks and also incurred costs, the *pro tem* Secretariat having set aside specific sums. I wish to commend to you the importance of carrying this forward, in whatever manner you wish to decide and however modestly or otherwise.

A mission consisting of the Vice-Chairman of the Bangalore Meeting, the Leader of the Sri Lanka delegation thereat and a UNEP staff member, visited two developed countries in Europe pursuant to prior exchanges; and visits had also been arranged to two OPEC countries.

to be undertaken later in the year. The mission had reason to believe that, in time, support to SACEP would be forthcoming from these sources and others. I wish here to address myself to all such interested countries and bodies in that spirit and to express my strong hope that they would respond as the occasion rightly demands. In this crucial need, at the initial stage of establishment of SACEP, I also wish specifically to note the substantive development funding role that I hope will be played by two major development financing institutions, the World Bank (IBRD) and the Asian Development Bank; and I invite them earnestly to look at this as essential component of their own priorities in development financing.

In regard to all these, I wish further to suggest a matter of particular relevance. I strongly hope that donor countries and institution, including those not here today, while considering the full measure of their support, will find it possible also to indicate during the course of this Meeting, and/or the Ministerial Meeting next week, or shortly after, the likely nature and scale (a) of their support, and (b) of such immediate financial contribution as they may be able to make. I make bold to consider this as an earnest of the world community's interest in and commitment to environment and development - a commitment too often, and too easily, expressed as sentiment; and translated too late as assistance, for sustenance of stability and progress. In saying so, I hasten to note the positive ideas and intentions for special financing to developing countries that certain countries have themselves pioneered. I hope to dwell on this a little more at the Ministerial Meeting next week. I should also add that certain countries which may not be involving themselves immediately with our countries at the SACEP level have, at the same time, indicated the firm existence of bilateral programmes with these countries under which country components of SACEP activities could well be considered. This is an important matter for SACEP Secretariat and the Focal Points in their later stage of development of their programme activities. As a concluding thought, and hope, I wish to commend, for the immediate consideration of all donor countries and bodies as may be willing and

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able, that they consider a modest lump sum contribution as a trust fund, for the annual proceeds thereof to be utilized on a continuing basis as start-up support, and later as means to maintaining baseline activities, under SACEP.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has indicated willingness to extend support to SACEP under its inter-country programme. A matter of interest to UNDP should also be that the Bangalore Meeting affirmed the wealth of capability and expertise available within the region and the importance of using this to the maximum. In doing so, it extended endorsement to the UNDP led and espoused TCDC approach, now well established in the entire United Nations system and recognized by all member countries of the United Nations. It is hoped that this will provide an additional strong basis and challenge for UNDP, as well as other sources, to come forward with their support.

UNEP itself seeks to work closely with UNDP, as the UN system's major funding source for pre-investment assistance. It does so, both in its country and inter-country programming activities and will continue to extend every physical support to SACEP within its capacity, as well as funding contribution within the limits of its resources.

As I mentioned at the outset, the Meeting at Bangalore further recommended the consideration by the Ministers of a declaration or convention. While the idea of such a declaration has therefore been included in the provisional agenda, the formulation of its actual contents is essentially a matter for the High Level Meeting. There has, therefore, been no attempt to present a background paper for this, as under the preceding three items, beyond transmitting to the South Asian countries a tentative informal note of some of the elements that suggested themselves from the Bangalore Meeting and subsequent contacts. We have no hesitation in commanding the idea of a declaration as, indeed, essential at this formative stage in establishing co-operation, but leave its content and formulation of a draft text to you.

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A further matter of importance also awaits your attention, namely, a decision on the main official or officials of the Secretariat, their designation or designations, and their selection for initial appointment by the High Level Meeting in order to make SACEP operational. This too is a matter, like the draft declaration, which I hope this Meeting will be able to decide upon by consensus and unanimous agreement, thereafter putting them to the Ministers' Meeting for their consideration and endorsement as appropriate.

Finally, the proposed Agenda provides for this Meeting to prepare a final report of its proceedings. As at Bangalore, I trust you would agree that the Report 'should be brief, with emphasis on conclusions and decisions for action'.

Your Excellency and Distinguished Delegates, the occasion demands, and I have every confidence, that this Meeting will fulfil the purposes for which it has met. With your wisdom and experience, and conscious of the distance we have travelled so far, I have no doubt that we shall take this significant step forward in the formal establishment of this co-operative programme for South Asia. In these tasks, I need hardly assure you of my fullest support and assistance at all times.

I wish the Meeting all success and your cause every strength.

I thank you.

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STATEMENT BY MR. Y.Y. KIM,
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE,
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN SRI LANKA
AND THE MALDIVES

It is a great pleasure for me to participate in this meeting on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme.

In recent years, more and more people are coming to understand the close relationship between development and environment. As an international organization for development, UNDP fully recognizes that, while it is true that development is the key to solving many of the environment problems, it is equally true that environment is a social and economic premise of any meaningful development. It is with this environmental awareness that UNDP has followed with interest the great efforts of the countries in Asia and the Pacific region, with the close co-operation and able assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), particularly its Regional Office, in the initiation and establishment of various subregional co-operative environment programmes on the basis of identified common interest. Here I am referring to the establishment of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), ASEAN Subregional Environment Programme (ASEP) and the programme activities of environment under the auspices of the Mekong Committee.

With the same interest, UNDP has followed the initiation of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), which, to our great satisfaction, will be officially established at this important meeting. During the process of initiating SACEP, we have been particularly impressed by the keen interest and strong support of the governments to this new endeavour. The high level participation of this meeting is just another clear indication of such interest and support. As we in UNDP have always held that the success of any programme and project, be it country or regional, rests with the

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support of the governments concerned, we have every reason to believe that SACEP is being established on a solid basis and with the continuing support of the governments, it will certainly prove to be a great success.

Bearing in mind the above, we consider it important for the participating governments of SACEP to assume the management and financial responsibility for the Co-ordinating Committee and for the area focal points, so that the co-operative programme would become part of their own development projects and not something imposed from outside. Based on this consideration and on financial constraints, we found it difficult to respond positively to a request that we provide the SACEP Co-ordinating Committee with institutional support. Indeed, this is consistent with our policy that regional IPF funds should be supplementary to Governments' own allocations rather than supplant them. In the draft inter-country programme for Asia and the Pacific, 1982-1986, it is emphasized that "the long-term viability of regional institutions depends on the financial contribution of participating governments. UNDP assistance will increasingly focus on the development and support of programme activities of regional institutions in priority areas." In this spirit, we are going to taper off UNDP institutional support wherever such are still provided to on-going regional projects and avoid such support as far as possible in any new projects. However, this does not mean that UNDP is not interested in supporting the SACEP activities. On the contrary, we had informed the Regional Office of UNEP immediately after your Expert Group Meeting last March that UNDP, if requested, would consider assistance to SACEP and the focal points in such areas as interchange of information, technical meetings and intraregional travel. I wish, nevertheless, to avail myself of this opportunity to add that UNDP is willing to consider, on a case by case basis, financial support for substantive programme activities to be undertaken by SACEP. As an indication of our interest, we have included UNDP support to SACEP in our proposed Asia and Pacific inter-country programme for 1982-1986 to be presented to the New Delhi Regional Aid Co-ordinators Meeting, which will be convened a few days from now. It is hoped that an indicative level of such support will be decided by the Meeting.

In deciding the specific areas and activities to which UNDP will provide its financial support, we should exert great efforts to prevent duplication of activities and waste of resources. In this regard, we have noted the rather wide areas of programme activities suggested to be undertaken by SACEP and we fear that some of these areas have not been accorded priority in the development plans of your governments. Moreover, some proposed activities seem to duplicate UNDP supported on-going regional projects such as the regional energy and mangrove development projects that we assist or soon will be assisting. It is consequently our hope that with the joint efforts of UNDP and SACEP, UNDP support to SACEP will serve to complement governments' efforts and would not duplicate activities already being undertaken or ones that should and could be better undertaken in a different framework.

I have enunciated UNDP's position with regard to our co-operation with SACEP very openly and frankly, which I believe is an indication of our sincerity towards your new programme. I wish you complete success in your declarations and efforts and look forward to the fruitful co-operation of UNDP with all of you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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