



**REPORT OF THE
SEVENTH GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING
OF THE
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

**22ND APRIL 1998
MALE, REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES**

**SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
(SACEP)
REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL (GC 7)**

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The Governing Council of the
South Asia Co-operative
Environment Programme (SACEP)
22nd April 1998, Male,
Republic of Maldives.**

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SEVENTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL (GC 7)
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REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Seventh Meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme was inaugurated in Male and the subsequent sessions held at Bandos Island Resort, Maldives on the 22nd April 1998.

2. ATTENDANCE

The Governing Council (GC 7) was attended by Representatives from the following Member Countries viz: India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Representatives from the following United Nations Agencies and International Organisations also participated: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Health Organisation (WHO) & World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

List of Participants is in Annex I.

3. INAUGURATION

The Seventh Meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme was inaugurated by H.E. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives. In his Inaugural Address H.E. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom said that "In a few years' time, we shall bid farewell to a century that has witnessed great progress in science and technology. And, we shall enter a new one with the hope and promise of scaling even greater heights. But only if mother earth can be given a new lease of life and only if we stop the abuse of the environment. Here in South Asia, we need a visionary approach to environmental matters. For, as we sit on the threshold of a new millennium, environmental conservation has become one of the most critical issues facing this region, and indeed the world. If we carry on business as usual, irreparable damage could be done to the earth's life support system."

A copy of his Address is in Annex II.

The Welcome Address was given by Mr. Hussain Shihab, Director, South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. In his welcome address he said that "In a climate of decreasing funds being made available for the developing countries for development and environmental protection, SACEP has been able to play a vital role in mobilising funds for environment related projects in the region. With the commitment of the member countries and the hard work of the Secretariat Staff, I have no doubt that SACEP will continue to play this vital and significant role and be able to continue with the implementation of its SACEP Strategy and Programme".

The text of his Address is in Annex III.

Hon. Abdul Rasheed Hussain, Minister of Planning, Human Resources and Environment, Republic of Maldives in his address at the inaugural session stated that "As we approach the year 2000, climate change threatens the survival of nations. Pollution endangers the health of people, and many species remain in danger of extinction. The preservation of natural resources we share is critical, not only to ensure the quality of our own health and our own well being, but also to help all the people, the present and the future, to enjoy a better life on planet earth. Thus, safeguarding the environment is a national, regional even a global obligation, for which we are all responsible.

The text of his Address is in **Annex IV**.

In his Address as Chairman, SACEP Governing Council, **Hon. Mr. Syed Asghar Ali Khan, Minister of State for Housing & Works, Islamic Republic of Pakistan** said that "We the people of South Asia are heirs to a unique history and rich culture. Our people are very industrious and enterprising. South Asia is rich in human resources with more than one fifth of the world population inhabiting it. We have the potential to emerge as an economically powerful entity like the European Union or ASEAN. Unfortunately we are caught up in a vicious circle of poverty, environmental degradation and under development. Activities and initiatives at the national and regional levels can prevent the decline in our socio-economic advancement. We should harness their full potential to prevent environmental degradation, eliminate poverty and place our countries on the path of development".

The text of his Address is in **Annex V**.

The Inaugural Session was also addressed by **Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Director & Regional Representative, United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Asia and Pacific**. In his address he said that "the distinctive uniqueness of SACEP lies in its proven ability to correctly identify national and regional needs, develop practical and result oriented activities in close co-operation with national representatives of the member States and partner agencies, and very efficiently and cost-effectively organise and manage their implementation". He further went on to add that "the Director and the staff of the SACEP Secretariat deserve our deep appreciation and congratulations for their excellent work. SACEP's very substantial accomplishments would not have been possible without the selfless commitment and dedication of its small but highly competent staff."

The text of his Address is in **Annex VI**.

In giving the Vote of Thanks, **Hon. Mr. Abdullahi Majeed, Deputy Minister of Planning, Human Resources and Environment, Republic of Maldives** initially thanked H.E. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives for sparing his valuable time to be present to inaugurate the Meeting. He also thanked the Ministers, Heads of Diplomatic Missions, UN Agencies and High Level Country Delegates for their presence.

The text of his Address is in **Annex VII**.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

In accordance with the provisions of Articles of Association of SACEP, **Hon Mr. Abdul Rasheed Hussain, Minister of Planning, Human Resources and Environment, Government of the Republic of Maldives** was elected Chairman of the Seventh Governing Council of SACEP. **Hon Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Minister of Environment & Forests, India** and **Hon. Mr. Nandimitra Ekanayake, Minister of Forestry & Environment, Sri Lanka** were elected as Vice Chairmen of the Meeting. **Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi, Environmental Expert, Ministry of Population & Environment, Nepal** was elected as Rapporteur.

5. AGENDA

The Governing Council (GC 7) discussed and adopted the Agenda of the Meeting. A copy of the Adopted Agenda is at **Annex VIII**.

6. STATEMENTS OF HEADS OF DELEGATIONS

The Heads of Delegations from India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan & Sri Lanka made presentations of their country statements to the Governing Council.

All statements reflected the initiatives taken by the countries in the area of environmental protection and management. The Country Statements clearly recognised the very crucial and pivotal role played by SACEP in the promotion of environmental management in the South Asian region and noted that this area of activity must receive priority attention.

The respective Country Statements are found in **Annexes IX to XIII**.

7. OTHER STATEMENTS

Representatives of the UN Agencies and International Organisations attending the Meeting also addressed the Governing Council and their statements are found in **Annexes XIV & XV**.

8. INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

A. SACEP SECRETARIAT

The Governing Council considered the relevant section of the **Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials (Annex XVI)** on this item. They noted with appreciation the excellent work of the small but highly efficient Secretariat.

The meeting was fully appreciative of the fact that there is an urgent need to strengthen the SACEP Secretariat in order that they could fulfill its obligations in serving the member countries.

The delegate from Sri Lanka agreed that it is a moral obligation on the part of his Government to ensure that they provide adequate host facilities to the Secretariat. He promised to take up this matter with the concerned authorities. On the question of allocating a piece of land for constructing a Secretariat, he said that his hand would be strengthened if SACEP had a definite proposal such as building plan and a strategy for raising funds for construction. The Meeting requested the Director of SACEP to prepare a Project Profile for the new SACEP Headquarters and its plans for financing within 6 months to be submitted to the Government of Sri Lanka.

The Governing Council agreed that the status of the Director of SACEP should be elevated to that of the Director General. Accordingly wherever there is reference made to the Director of SACEP, the Articles of Association of SACEP will be amended to read as Director General.

The host country Representative said that he would like to respond favourably to the request made for granting diplomatic privileges to the Director General of SACEP equivalent to that of Ambassador / High Commissioner and that he would pursue the matter in accordance with the diplomatic procedures.

B. SUBJECT AREA AND COUNTRY FOCAL POINTS

The Governing Council considered the relevant section of the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials on this item.

The Governing Council was in agreement that there was a need to revise the list of Subject Area Focal Points of SACEP and endorsed the revised list of Subject Area Focal Points.

The revised list is given below:

| | Priority Subject Area | Country |
|-----|--|----------------|
| 1. | Conservation of Biodiversity | India |
| 2. | Sustainable Tourism Development | Maldives |
| 3. | Management of Coral Island Ecosystems | Maldives |
| 4. | Management of Fresh Water Resources | Bangladesh |
| 5. | Desertification | Pakistan |
| 6. | Environmental Legislation | India |
| 7. | Participatory Forest Management | Nepal |
| 8. | Sustainable Agriculture and Land Use | Sri Lanka |
| 9. | Sustainable Human Settlements Development | Sri Lanka |
| 10. | Waste Management | India |
| 11. | Science & Technology for Sustainable Development | Pakistan |
| 12. | Education & Training | India |
| 13. | Energy & Environment | India |
| 14. | Air Pollution | Pakistan |

The Governing Council agreed that the Subject Area Focal Points be requested by the Ministries of Environment of the respective member countries to formulate Regional Projects on their Subject Area and to make them available to the Secretariat by 1st October 1998.

It was also agreed that Country Focal Points should be called upon to nominate National Level Institutions which would function as the Subject Area Focal Points as soon as possible

9. PROGRAMME MATTERS

A. PROGRESS OF PROGRAMME AND PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The Governing Council was appreciative of the fact of the increased Programme Activities of SACEP and that SACEP now has greater visibility in the region in respect of environmental activities.

The delegates expressed their satisfaction that despite constraints in manpower and finances the performance of the Secretariat was satisfactory. They emphasised their appreciation for the work done by the Secretariat in the implementation of programmes between the 6th and 7th Governing Councils and noted that this had been the period in which most number of projects had been implemented by SACEP for the benefit of the member countries as well as the region as a whole.

The meeting also noted that the programmes formulated for the future and projects currently being implemented were in line with Agenda 21 and the felt needs of the member countries. It was also noted that the projects that are being implemented have been determined at the request of the member countries.

The Head of the Indian Delegation in deference to the suggestion made by His Excellency President of Maldives and keeping in view the decisions taken in the SAARC Environment Conference agreed to the Draft Resolution on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Transboundary Effects in South Asia. Thereafter the Governing Council decided to adopt it as the Male Declaration as presented by the Secretariat. The Male Declaration is given in Annex XVI.

B. REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

The meeting was specially appreciative of UNEP and UNEP/ EAP/ AP and the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) for their generous programme support both financially and technically. It also noted the assistance and support given by ADB and ESCAP.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. COUNTRY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBER STATES FOR SACEP SECRETARIAT

The meeting agreed on the need to strengthen the Secretariat and that a fully operational Secretariat with the full complement of professional staff would be beneficial to the member countries in the long term.

The Representative of Sri Lanka appreciated the need to enhance its host facilities, which in 1998 amounted to SL Rs 2.1 million or US \$ 35,000. He said that he would take up this matter with the concerned authorities and request that in the future the yearly increase in host facilities should at least be in line with the rate of inflation so that no additional burden will be placed on the Secretariat. He also said that they would look very favourably at the revised country contributions suggested by the Secretariat and would also take this matter up with the concerned authorities.

The other delegates too agreed to take up the matter of the revised country contributions with the concerned authorities. It was agreed that the countries who were not yet contributing at the pledged level would report to the Secretariat by 1st August 1998 on the question of its arrears in respect of the amounts pledged and that all countries would respond by 1st of November 1998 to the request for enhanced contributions from 1st January 1999.

REVISED COUNTRY CONTRIBUTION CHART

| MEMBER STATE | PERCENTAGE | CONTRIBUTION IN US \$ | ROUNDED OFF TO IN US \$ |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| BANGLADESH | 16.72 | 21,301 | 21,300 |
| BHUTAN | 2.79 | 3,554 | 3,555 |
| INDIA | 25.00 | 31,850 | 31,850 |
| MALDIVES | 11.44 | 14,575 | 14,575 |
| NEPAL | 6.32 | 8,052 | 8,050 |
| PAKISTAN | 25.00 | 31,850 | 31,850 |
| SRI LANKA | 12.73 | 16,218 | 16,220 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 127,400 | 127,400 |

B. ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRUST FUND FOR SACEP PROGRAMMES

It was agreed that SACEP should approach bilateral and multilateral funding agencies with a concrete portfolio outlining in detail the aims and functions and activities of SACEP. In this regard the meeting requested the Director to prepare such a portfolio and make it available to possible donor/funding agencies including GEF. The member governments too were requested to approach such agencies.

C. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1996

Under this Agenda Item, taking into consideration the Report of the Senior Officials, the Governing Council approved the Annual Audited Report of Accounts of the SACEP Secretariat for 1996.

D. APPROVAL OF PROGRAMME AND SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 1998 AND 1999

The Governing Council as recommended by the Meeting of Senior Officials approved the Secretariat Budget for 1998. The Governing Council also approved the Secretariat Budget for 1999, which was based on the Minimal Annual Budgetary Requirements for Fully Operational Secretariat. The approved Budgets are given as Annexes XVII & XVIII of this Report.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- A) The relationship between SACEP and SAARC was discussed at length. The Governing Council decided to request all member governments to take appropriate measures and steps for the following:
 - a) To ensure that SAARC is informed of SACEP's experience and its wish to collaborate and complement the work of SAARC in the area of environment;
 - b) To ensure that SACEP continues as the premier body on environment in South Asia;
 - c) To request the SAARC Summit to direct the SAARC Secretariat to invite the Director of SACEP to make a presentation on its programmes and plans.
- B) The Meeting noted the special vulnerability of some SACEP member countries to the projected Climate Change and Sea Level Rise and requested the SACEP Secretariat to give more attention to the issue of Climate Change in their future programmes and projects at the Meeting of SAARC Environment Ministers.
- C) The meeting placed on record the invaluable services rendered to SACEP by the Director Mr. Hussain Shihab. It was recognised that during his tenure of office SACEP had received greater visibility and he had been able to mobilise funding for many projects for SACEP. The meeting wished him all success in his future endeavours.
- D) The Governing Council approved the appointment of Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi, who has been nominated by His Majesty's Government of Nepal to succeed Mr. Hussain Shihab as the next Director of SACEP for a period of three years as provided for in Article 7 (a) of the Articles of Association.
- E) The Meeting agreed that the inaugural address by H.E. President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom would be an official document of the Seventh Governing Council of SACEP.

12. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

The Governing Council considered and adopted this Report on the 22nd April 1998.

13. CONCLUDING SESSION

The Director of SACEP expressed his gratitude to the Chairman, the other Office Bearers and the Ministry of Planning, Environment and Human Resources for their generosity and ^{unstinted} ~~entire~~ co-operation in making this Governing Council a success.

Mr. K. A. S. Gunasekera, Secretary, Ministry of Forestry & Environment, Sri Lanka speaking on behalf of all the Delegates present, thanked the Chairman of the Governing Council and the Government and the people of Maldives for the warm hospitality extended to all the participants and for the excellent arrangements made for the Seventh Session of the Governing Council. He also thanked the Director of SACEP and the Secretariat for the outstanding substantive and logistical support provided by them for the smooth and efficient conduct of the Session.

The Chairman, Hon. Abdul Rasheed Hussain, Minister of Planning, Human Resources and Environment, Republic of Maldives thanked all Delegates and the Director and the SACEP Secretariat for their wholehearted co-operation in ensuring the success of this meeting.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

SACEP MEMBERS

INDIA

Hon. Mr. Suresh Prabhu
Minister of Environment & Forests
Ministry of Environment & Forests
Parayavaran Bhavan
C.G.O. Complex
Lodhi Road
New Delhi 110003
India

Tel 91 - 11 - 462 9133 / 436 1727 / 436 1748
Fax 91 - 11 - 436 2222 / 436 0678

H.E. K. S. Jasrotia
High Commissioner of India in Maldives
High Commission of India
Male
Maldives

Tel 960 - 323 015
Fax 960 - 324 778

Mr. Yogeshwar Varma
Deputy High Commissioner of India in Maldives
High Commission of India
Male
Maldives

Tel 960 - 324 321
Fax 960 - 324 778

Mrs. Mira Mehroshi
Director
Ministry of Environment & Forests
Parayavaran Bhavan
C.G.O. Complex
Lodhi Road
New Delhi 110003
India

Tel 91 - 11 - 436 0783
Fax 91 - 11 - 436 0783

MALDIVES

Hon. Abdul Rasheed Hussain
Minister of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 3919
Fax 960 - 32 3919
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Hon. Abdullahi Majeed
Deputy Minister of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 32 3825 / 32 3303
Fax 960 – 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Mr. Hamdun Hameed
Director General
Human Resources Division
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 32 3919
Fax 960 – 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Mr. Mohamed Khaleel
Deputy Director Environmental Affairs
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 32 3039
Fax 960 – 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Mr. Mohamed Hunaid
Deputy Director, Physical Planning
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 32 3919
Fax 960 – 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Ms. Aiyshath Azima Shakoor
Legal Officer
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 32 0841
Fax 960 – 32 3919
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Mr. Sinad Saeed
Assistant Director Programmes
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 31 2485
Fax 960 – 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv / ssaeed@hotmail.com

Mr. Ahmed Ali
Assistant Environment Analyst
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Chassam Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 4861
Fax 960 - 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

NEPAL

H. E. Mr. Nilamber Acharya,
High Commissioner to Sri Lanka
Royal Nepalese Embassy
153 Kynsey Road
Colombo 7
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 689 656 / 689 657
Fax 94 - 1 - 689 655

Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi
Environmental Expert
Ministry of Population and Environment
Singh Durbar
Kathmandu
His Majesty's Government of Nepal

Tel 977 - 1 - 245 367
Fax 977 - 1 - 242 138

PAKISTAN

Hon. Syed Asghar Ali Khan
Minister of State for Housing & Works,
Ministry of State for Housing & Works
Islamabad
Pakistan

Tel 92 - 51 - 920 1794
Fax 92 - 51 - 920 2952

Mr. Asaf Khan
Second Secretary & Head of Chancery
High Commission of Pakistan
211 De Saram Place
Colombo 10
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 696 301 - 2
Fax 94 - 1 - 695 780, 685 635

SRI LANKA

Hon. Nandimithra Ekanayake
Minister of Forestry & Environment
Ministry of Forestry and Environment
82, Sampathpaya
Rajamalwatta Rd
Battaramulla
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 86 6617
Fax 94 - 1 - 86 6656

Mr. K. A. S. Gunasekera
Secretary
Ministry of Forestry and Environment
82, Sampathpaya
Rajamahawatta Rd
Battaramulla
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 86 8048, 87 7290, 594 766
Fax 94 - 1 - 86 6656 / 502 566

Ms. W. S. Perera
Acting High Commissioner
Sri Lanka High Commission
Male'
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 2845
Fax 960 - 32 2845

Mrs. Swinetha Malalasekera
Director, Planning
Ministry of Forestry and Environment
82, Sampathpaya
Rajamahawatta Rd
Battaramulla
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 88 3098
Fax 94 - 1 - 86 6656

UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Dr. Sark Yodmani
Director & Regional Representative
United Nations Environment Programme
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
The UN Building
Rajdamnern Avenue
Bangkok 10200
Thailand

Tel 662 - 288 1870
Fax 662 - 280 3829

Mr. Surendra Shrestha
Regional Co-ordinator
Environment Assessment Programme for Asia and the Pacific
Room 304, Outreach Building
Asian Institute of Technology
P. O. Box 4
Klong Luang
Pathumthani 12120
Thailand

Tel 662 - 516 2124
Fax 662 - 516 2125
e-mail surendra@ait.ac.th

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Mr. Narinder Kakar
Resident Representative for Maldives
United Nations Development Programme
UN Building
P. O. Box 2058
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 324 505
Fax 960 - 324 504

Ms. Makiko Koriyama
Programme Officer
United Nations Development Programme
UN Building
P. O. Box 2058
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 4501
Fax 960 - 32 4504
e-mail makiko.koriyama@undp.org

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

Dr. El Kubota
WHO Representative to Maldives
P. O. Box 2004
Male 20 - 06
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 7519 / 2410
Fax 960 - 32 4210
e-mail didi@wrmav.ernet.in

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANISATION

Hon. Abdullahi Majeed
Deputy Minister of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 3919
Fax 960 - 32 3919
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

SACEP SECRETARIAT

Mr. Hussain Shihab
Director
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 589 376 / 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369
e-mail hs_sacep@eureka.lk

Mr. Prasanna Dias Abeygunawardana
Deputy Director Programmes
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 596 442 / 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369
e-mail pd_sacep@eureka.lk

Mr. Pradyumna Kumar Kotte
Project Co-ordinator
SACEP Environmental Natural Resources Information Centre
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 596 443 / 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369
e-mail pk_sacep@eureka.lk

Mr. K. H. J. Wijayaratne
Consultant
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 584 137
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369

Ms. Mariana Pereira
Deputy Director Administration
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369

Ms. Chandima Jayasuriya
Secretarial Assistant
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF H.E. MAUMOON ABDUL GAYOOM PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

*Honourable Ministers,
Chairman of the SACEP Governing Council,
Director of SACEP,
Regional Director of UNEP,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is my pleasure, first of all, to extend a very warm welcome to you, and wish you a very comfortable and fruitful stay in Maldives.

It is my pleasure, too, to express our deep appreciation to the out-going Director of SACEP, Mr. Hussain Shihab, for the important contribution he has made to the work of the Organisation. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate his successor, Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi, and wish him success in discharging his duties.

Honourable Minister, Distinguished Delegates:

In a few years' time, we shall bid farewell to a century that has witnessed great progress in science and technology. And, we shall enter a new one with the hope and promise of scaling even greater heights. But only if mother earth can be given a new lease of life; and only if we stop the abuse of the environment.

Here in South Asia, we need a visionary approach to environmental matters. For, as we sit on the threshold of a new millennium, environmental conservation has become one of the most critical issues facing this region, and indeed the world. If we carry on business as usual, irreparable damage could be done to the earth's life support system.

The ecological challenge facing South Asia is an enormous one. Congestion in cities, pollution of waterways, erosion of coastlines, deforestation, acid rain, and global warming are only a part of the list of challenges that we must address. Indeed, all these problems are further compounded by South Asia's vast and rapidly growing population, and its economic woes.

With over 1.2 billion people, South Asia is already one of the most populous regions in the world. This, in itself, exerts tremendous pressures on the sustainable use of resources. The low level of economic development of our region has kept many adaptive and preventive measures beyond our reach. Moreover, the rural populations of our countries depend directly upon the environment to meet their survival needs, further increasing the strain on the fragile ecosystem.

However, if what we face today is a daunting task, then tomorrow holds a challenge that might be truly colossal. It has been estimated that by the middle of the next century, the total population of South Asia would be around 2.3 billion. We would have outstripped China. But, we would have diminishing resources, whether oceanic or land-based, to sustain such a large population.

This points to a broad agenda. We must stabilise population levels and adhere to sustainable use of resources. And we must ensure that environmental deterioration is stopped, if not reversed.

Six months ago, the SAARC Ministers of Environment gathered here in Male' and agreed on an Environment Action Plan. This plan sets out the environmental priorities of the region and actions that should be undertaken to protect and preserve the environment both at national and regional levels. Since your meeting here gives you the opportunity to devise the SACEP strategy and the programme for the future, I would like to suggest that the SACEP activities complement that Action Plan.

Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates:

Time is of the essence. Indeed, for those in vulnerable areas, time is critical. The islands of the Maldives are among the most vulnerable. Our islands are low-lying and small. Over the past 15 years or so, we have observed that coastal erosion has rapidly increased. Today, over 40 percent of the inhabited islands are facing a serious erosion problem, which is physically threatening the settlements on them. We wish to bring this new and alarming threat to the attention of the international community.

Erosion may be an early warning of an impending disaster. For, the average height of our islands is only one metre above sea level. According to the worst case scenario estimates of the IPCC, sea levels could rise by about 95 centimetres by the end of the next century. Should that be the case, over 80 percent of the land area of the Maldives will be inundated.

In 1987 unusually high swells caused widespread destruction throughout the Maldives. In Male', a large portion of the reclaimed land was washed away, houses were damaged and residents had to be temporarily evacuated. On the adjacent island of Hulhule, aviation operations of the Male' International Airport had to be suspended until damage to the runway and equipment could be repaired. Again, in 1991, unprecedented monsoonal storms wreaked extensive destruction. Over 11 percent of the population were affected. Losses were estimated at US \$ 30 million, equivalent to 22 percent of our GDP of that time.

I would like to add here that we are concerned by the current, long spell of dry and hot weather throughout the Maldives. Looking at past records we observe that such an extended period of hot weather is quite unusual. Could this perhaps be another manifestation of global warming?

The Maldives has already taken many steps to control ecological degradation and to protect and preserve its environment. However, not even a large country, let alone a small one, can effectively address these problems on its own. Obviously, international co-operation is vital in this critical area. Therefore, we call upon the international community to help us in safeguarding our population and succeeding generations.

Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates:

This year we mark the International Year of the Ocean. No doubt, we all recognise the importance of the oceans in our lives and in those of the generations to come. The Indian Ocean brings together, in its littoral states, nearly one-third of the world's population. It is also home to an immense diversity of marine life, and represents a vast regional commons. For the Maldives, the Indian Ocean remains the backbone of its economy.

All over the world, the oceans have been showing clear signs of stress. Several marine species have become endangered. Destructive fishing practices and poaching by large fishing fleets can wipe out small scale and environmentally friendly fisheries.

The situation demands that we take immediate steps for the conservation of the Indian Ocean. We will have to agree on national and regional initiatives that will sustain marine ecosystems. I understand that SACEP has been asked to co-ordinate the implementation of the South Asian Seas Programme developed by UNEP. I urge all countries to make use of the opportunities provided under that programme.

Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates:

When an earthquake hits and thousands of lives are lost, we are shocked by the tragedy. When an aircraft explodes in mid-air and hundreds of people die, we are overwhelmed by grief. When we see victims of terror, torn from limb to limb, we shudder, and resolve to give it no quarter.

There are many other people dying everyday. No sensational headlines; no media coverage. They die a slow, painful death, because of the emission of poisonous gases into the atmosphere, dumping of toxic wastes into rivers and seas, and because the chemical and physical balance that supports life on earth is disturbed. If we really care about life, the sense of loss or indignation in such cases should not be any less.

Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,

We should not wait for the fumes to come and choke us. Before the last tree has been felled, before the last river has been poisoned, and before the last fish has been caught, we should realise that money does not feed.

The choice that South Asia, and indeed the world, face today is a stark one. The options are either inertia or action. One spells doom, the other survival and progress. It will not be a choice a country makes only for itself, or for one generation, one time. But, it is one that will affect all our countries and all our peoples, for all times.

Thank you!

**ADDRESS OF WELCOME BY MR. HUSSAIN SHIHAB,
DIRECTOR,
SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

*Your Excellency President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom,
Honourable Abdul Rasheed Hussain, Minister of Planning, Human Resources and Environment of Maldives
Honourable Syed Asghar Ali Shah, Minister of State for Housing and Works, Islamic Republic of Pakistan,
Dr. Sunit Yodmani, Regional Director & Representative for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Environment Programme
Honourable Ministers, Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a singular honour for me this morning to welcome you all to this Inaugural Session of the Seventh Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. It gives me great pleasure most of all to welcome His Excellency President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom since we at SACEP consider His Excellency as the champion of the cause for environmental protection in South Asia.

His Excellency's numerous calls at various international fora has awakened the international community to the plight of the developing countries specially the Small Island States due to the neglect by the developed world in caring for the environment.

Your Excellency, I thank you on behalf of the member countries of SACEP for honouring us with your presence here to inaugurate this historic 7th Governing Council of SACEP.

I would also like to thank His Excellency the President and the people of Maldives for the kind hospitality that has been given to the delegations of SACEP member countries and the United Nations Agencies.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme is in its 16th year of environmental protection activities in this region. The last four years has seen a tremendous boost in these activities. We have implemented programmes on Environmental Education, Faunal Biodiversity, Environmental Data Gathering and Storage, Environmental Management and Marine Protection and Conservation. Two of our on-going programmes deal with Environmental Legislation and Floral Biodiversity. A SACEP Web Page would be soon available for interested party to access. These innovative and far reaching programmes have had a great impact on future direction of environmental management in the region.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen

In a climate of decreasing funds being made available for the developing countries for development and environmental protection, SACEP has been able to play a vital role in mobilising funds for environment related projects in the region. With the commitment of the member countries and the hardwork of the Secretariat Staff, I have no doubt that SACEP will continue to play this vital and significant role and be able to continue with the implementation of its SACEP Strategy and Programme. At this juncture, I would also like to note the generous assistance being given to SACEP by the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation, United Nations Environment Programme, Asian Development Bank and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

Your Excellency and Distinguished Ministers,

In conclusion let me also welcome the Honourable Ministers and Senior Officials to this 7th Governing Council of SACEP. The work done at the meeting of the Senior Officials was an unusually gratifying exercise. I would like to thank the senior Officials for the painstaking and diligent approach to the task before them. I am confident that all matters put before them have been considered in the most favourable light and that the Honourable Ministers would be more than satisfied with the outcome. I welcome you once again to my beautiful country and hope that this visit to the Maldives will be not only fruitful but will also be a memorable occasion which will be remembered by all participants of this Seventh Governing Council of SACEP.

**ADDRESS BY HON. MR. ABDUL RASHEED HUSSAIN
MINISTER OF PLANNING, HUMAN RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT,
REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES**

*Your Excellency President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom,
Honourable Ministers,
Director of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, Mr. Hussain Shihab,
Regional Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Dr. Suvit Yodmani,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a great privilege for me to welcome you to the seventh meeting of the SACEP Governing Council. This is the first time, the Maldives is hosting a Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP and I take great pleasure in welcoming to Maldives the Honourable Ministers and all the delegates who have come to attend this meeting. I wish you a successful meeting and hope that you have an enjoyable and memorable stay in the Maldives.

At this juncture, allow me also to thank Your Excellency Mr. President for honouring us with your presence here this morning to inaugurate this important meeting. Your Excellency's commitment to the cause of environmental protection is well known. In South Asia, Your Excellency has shaped the new political thinking on environment, and Your Excellency is not just a man for all islands but a leader for whom South Asia will be proud of as well.

Your Excellency, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates.

We all recognise that today's progress must not come at tomorrow's expense. Today's progress also doesn't have to come at the expense of the air we breathe the water we drink, the food we eat, the land we live in, or the species that support life on earth. Development and economic growth also doesn't have to come at the expense of other people, other cultures and other nations.

As we approach the year 2000, climate change threatens the survival of nations. Pollution endangers the health of people and many species remain in danger of extinction. The preservation of natural resources we share is critical, not only to ensure the quality of our own health and our own well being, but also to help all the people, the present and the future, to enjoy a better life on planet earth. Thus, safeguarding the environment is a national, regional even a global obligation, for which we are all responsible. Environmental protection and preservation is a common task, one to which every citizen, every community, every business and every government should be committed.

In this regard, I applaud the work the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme has been doing to promote environmental protection in the South Asian region. I am pleased to note here, that presently, we are implementing three projects in Maldives with the assistance of SACEP. These projects are aimed at strengthening our environmental legislation, strengthening our environmental information management capacity, environmental awareness raising and state of the environment reporting.

We are particularly interested to see the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme continue the excellent work it is presently undertaking.

Your Excellency, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates

I should like to take this opportunity now to mention here some important aspects in the Maldives, which may be of interest to the delegates attending this meeting. The Maldivian government's overriding environmental objective continues to be, to maintain and improve the environment of the country and to manage the resources contained therein, for the collective benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Thus, the Government of Maldives has taken careful measures to ensure that the two mainstays of our economy: tourism and fisheries are sustainable. The Maldives has developed a very suitable form of tourism, appropriate to the small island environment. This has been achieved through very careful consideration of carrying capacity limits and very stringent measures on waste management and freshwater conservation.

In the protection of our marine environment, we also have undertaken important measures to protect our coral reefs, as they are renowned for their aesthetic beauty and species diversity. Our fisheries law strictly prohibits the exploitation of endangered or any threatened species. Recognising the importance of protecting marine ecosystems in the Maldives, 15 sites have been designated by the Government as protected areas. To ensure that fisheries is sustainable, quantity limits has been set and controls placed on type of fisheries that can be practised. In Maldives, drift net fishing is not permitted and in tuna fishing we use the pole and line method.

A two million tree programme has also been initiated in January 1996. Under this three year programme it is planned to plant two million additional trees in the Maldives. Recently a major clean up campaign also has been initiated by our President under the slogan "Independent Maldives - Clean Maldives". The wide spread support for and the success of these campaigns demonstrate the willingness and commitment of Maldivians to environmental protection.

Your Excellency, Honourable Minister's Distinguished Delegates

At home we have woken up to face most of the Challenges that await us. But our home is in the global village. The village that belongs to all of us. In our village one friends negligence could mean doom for all of us. In this regard we urge all our neighbours and friends to help us in making our global village a safe and pleasant village and let us all remain true to the spirit of Rio.

Thank you.

**ADDRESS BY CHAIRMAN GOVERNING COUNCIL 6
HON. MR. SYED ASGHAR ALI SHAH,
MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOUSING AND WORKS
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN**

*Excellency Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is indeed a great honour for us to have your distinguished presence at the inauguration of the Seventh Governing Council Meeting of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme being held here in Male. We are thankful to you for taking time off from your busy schedule and to honour us with your gracious presence which will be a great source of encouragement to the distinguished participants of the Governing Council who have gathered here to deliberate upon on a number of very important environmental issues of concern to this region.

Your Excellency,

I bring you the greetings and good wishes of the Prime Minister of Pakistan His Excellency Mohamed Nawaz Sharif and the people of Pakistan. May I also take this opportunity to convey to the Government of Maldives the appreciation of all the distinguished delegates who are here for the very warm hospitality extended to them. The care and warmth shown by your people have touched our hearts and I assure you that we all will carry very happy memories of our stay in the Maldives. The excellent arrangements made for the meeting has ensured that our meeting will be a successful one.

Your Excellency,

We are all impressed by tremendous efforts being made by the Republic of Maldives under your able guidance and leadership to preserve the pristine environment of this beautiful country. Issues concerning the environment are receiving top priority which is an indication of the importance being attached to this important subject by your Government.

Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,

SACEP since its inception in 1982 has grown in stature. During the recent years SACEP has been in the forefront of environmental activities in the South Asian region. They have undertaken many innovative and meaningful projects which would contribute to the improvement of our threatened environment. Pakistan has been associated with SACEP since its very inception and has been supporting and benefiting from its programmes of activities both at the regional and the national level. We are firmly committed to the efforts of SACEP and would endeavour to assist this organisation to the best of our ability.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

We the people of South Asia are heirs to a unique history and rich culture. Our people are very industrious and enterprising. South Asia is rich in human resources with more than one fifth of the world population inhabiting it. We have the potential to emerge as an economically powerful entity like the European Union or ASEAN. Unfortunately we are caught up in a vicious circle of poverty, environmental degradation and under development. Activities and initiatives at the national and regional levels can prevent the decline in our socio-economic advancement. We should harness their full potential to prevent environmental degradation, eliminate poverty and place our countries on the path of development.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

The Governing Council has before it a full and important agenda. Many issues are of great relevance and have a direct bearing on the welfare of our people. The Governing Council would review its progress and give directions to the Secretariat for future activities.

SACEP will have to address seriously the question of resource mobilisation which is of vital importance for the implementation of its programmes. Being poor countries, we are all faced with resource constraints. We are however confident that this hurdle would be overcome given this strong commitment and will ^{be} demonstrated by the countries of the region in this important field of endeavour.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, with these words now I have the great honour and privilege to request His Excellency Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of the Maldives to inaugurate the Seventh Governing Council Meeting of SACEP and address this distinguished gathering.

**ADDRESS BY DR. SUVIT YODMANI
DIRECTOR & REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME,
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

*Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellency, Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Participants and Guests,*

I would like first of all to convey to His Excellency President Gayoom and the Governing Council the warm greetings and best wishes of Dr. Klaus Toepfer, the new Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. Dr. Toepfer regrets very much his inability to visit your beautiful and hospitable country on this occasion due to other pressing engagements but looks forward to doing so in the future. The Executive Director has also asked me to extend to you Mr. Chairman, and through you to the distinguished Representatives of member States of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, and the Director SACEP Mr. Hussain Shihab and his staff at the Secretariat, his best wishes for successful deliberations at the Seventh Session of the SACEP Governing Council.

At the beginning of this month in New Delhi the Executive Director Dr. Toepfer unfolded UNEP's new profile and highlighted several of the priority areas of action, almost all of which are of special interest to the South Asia region and therefore to SACEP and our joint programme of activities. In emphasising the importance of safeguarding the environment in the context of the urgent need for developing countries to pursue economic growth and social justice, he said:

"No one would hold that the less developed countries should remain condemned to perpetual underdevelopment. The legitimate development needs of people cannot be denied by using arguments for environmental concern. The natural resources of Mother Earth are limited. But at the same time, adverse environmental impacts to a certain degree, is reversible by human effort. This, in fact, is what sustainable development is all about, and to make it clear it is first of all development. All human beings have a right to use their natural resources in a sustainable way to enable them to pursue economic development. We must not resign to perceived limits of growth. We must constantly explore the frontiers of economic growth in ways in which the natural resource base creates opportunities for human growth. The growth that we look for must be economically, environmentally and socially sustainable."

This paradigm constitutes the essential backdrop and guiding light for UNEP's work in the field of environment. I have no doubt that SACEP and all its member States will warmly welcome this balanced approach to environment and development enunciated by Dr. Toepfer.

Among the major areas of focus for UNEP's work that Dr. Toepfer listed are several issues of special concern to countries in South Asia. Among these are early warning systems, priority setting and the development of information on the hot spots and environmental catastrophes to alert nations of potential conflicts over common shared resources; further developing and improving UNEP's leadership role in forging political consensus on emerging environmental problems and in the development of economic instruments; promoting the use and application of innovative economic instruments and practices as efficient and cost effective tools for achieving the goals of sustainable development, and building on the successes achieved in developing major global and regional environmental agreements and ensuring their effective implementation. In this regard, Dr. Toepfer said that UNEP is prepared to take a decisive follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol, which is a matter of extreme importance to countries in South Asia and especially countries like the Maldives which are particularly vulnerable to the predicted consequences of climate change.

Many of these issues have already been the subject of major joint initiatives between SACEP and UNEP during the last three years in the areas of environmental management, environmental law and environmental assessment and implementation of conventions. UNEP is fully committed to building on these activities and consolidating the significant achievements of our joint activities in the years to come.

UNEP's bonds of friendship, support and mutual co-operation with the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme goes back to its very inception in 1982. In the sixteen years that followed, SACEP has carried out many outstanding projects and programmes in the field of environmental management in South Asia and has grown in stature and acquired the recognition and respect of Governments, international organisations and the donor community as the principal inter-governmental implementing organisation in the field of environmental management in the South Asia region. Following the request from member governments UNEP has assisted in the establishment of SACEP's Environmental and Natural Resources Information Centre (SENRIC). SENRIC has been effective in dissemination of tools for environment assessment. Other areas of co-operation include environmental law, capacity building including training, implementation of environmental conventions and Regional Seas Action Plan.

Air Pollution and its effects are major concern in South Asia. With agreement of member governments UNEP will assist SACEP to implement a new programme on air pollution in 1998.

The distinctive uniqueness of SACEP lies in its proven ability to correctly identify national and regional needs, develop practical and result oriented activities in close cooperation with national representatives of the member States and partner agencies, and very efficiently and cost-effectively organise and manage their implementation. The Director and the staff of the SACEP Secretariat deserve our deep appreciation and congratulations for their excellent work. SACEP's very substantial accomplishments would not have been possible without the selfless commitment and dedication of its small but highly competent staff.

Before I conclude, I should like to take this opportunity to express on behalf of UNEP and on my own personal behalf our deep appreciation of the outstanding contribution made by Mr. Hussain Shihab, the Director of SACEP who will shortly relinquish his duties as Director. He brought with him to this task a wealth of experience in the area of environment, having served as the Minister in charge of the subject of Environment in the Government of the Maldives. His impressive diplomatic and negotiation skills, as well as extensive managerial experience has made it possible for SACEP to make very significant advances during his tenure of office in promoting fruitful collaboration among the member countries on a wide range of environmental programmes. He has also succeeded at the same time in forging enduring partnerships with several organisations within and outside the United Nations system, including UNEP and in strengthening donor confidence in the capacity of SACEP to deliver results, which led to substantial funding of SACEP's programmes of activities by International Banking Institutions and Donor governments. We take this opportunity to wish Mr. Shihab a very happy and rewarding future career. We also take this opportunity to wish the new Director of SACEP, Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi a very successful term of office and pledge to him our continuing co-operation and support.

Thank you.

**VOTE OF THANKS BY HON. MR. ABDULLAHI MAJEED
DEPUTY MINISTER OF PLANNING HUMAN RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT
MALE, REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES**

*Your Excellency President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom,
Honourable Ministers,
Chairman of the Governing Council &
Director of SACEP,
Distinguished Delegates and
Ladies and Gentlemen:*

I deem it both an honour ^{and} a privilege to propose a vote of thanks in this august gathering.

On behalf of the Republic of Maldives I would like to sincerely thank the Director of SACEP, Mr. Hussain Shihab for concurring us to host the Seventh Meeting of the Governing Council in the country. Though this is the first time Maldives is convening a meeting of the Governing Council, we have hosted some seminars and workshops in the past. While SACEP functions with modest staff, the organisation is doing a marvellous job, in the protection of the environment in South Asia. Twenty projects are formulated for the period 1996 - 2000 to be conducted in the countries of the Region. Three projects are being implemented in the Maldives through the assistance of SACEP. I have no doubt that we will reap their benefits in a few years time once when the projects are completed,

*Mr. President,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates*

I wish to express my profound appreciation to His Excellency the President for taking time off of his crowded official duties for gracing this ceremony. No doubt, yet again, this is testimony of his whole hearted commitment for environment. Mr. President, your unwavering efforts to demonstrate the plight of environment from Vancouver in 1987 to New York in 1997 and the major campaign conducted at home have made environment synonymous with your name both at abroad and home alike. We are truly proud of your enlightened and far-sighted leadership.

*Mr. President,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates*

We are honoured with the presence of Hon. Suresh Prabhu, Minister of Environment and Forests of India, Hon. Syed Asghar Ali Shah, Minister of State for Housing and Works of Pakistan Hon. Nandimitra Ekanayake, Minister of Environment and Forests of Sri Lanka and. We are most grateful for their visits despite pressing commitments in their countries.

We would like to thank very much Dr. Suvit Yodmani, UNEP's Regional Director, and the Representative of the Executive Director of UNDP for giving priority to Maldives despite a very important meeting in Geneva.

Finally, I would like to record my appreciation to all the presentees and staff of both government and private offices who made this ceremony possible through their kind assistance,

Thank you.

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

**SEVENTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
MALE, MALDIVES
22 APRIL 1998**

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of Office Bearers
3. Adoption of Agenda and Organisation of Work
4. Country Statements & Statements by United Nations Agencies, International/Regional Organisations and Aid Consortia
5. **INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**
 - a) SACEP Secretariat
 - b) Subject Area and Country Focal Points
6. **PROGRAMME MATTERS**
 - a) Progress of Programme and Project Activities
 - b) Review of International Co-operation
7. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**
 - a) Country Contributions from Member States for SACEP Secretariat
 - b) Establishment of Trust Fund for SACEP Programmes
 - c) Approval of Annual Audited Report of Accounts for 1996
 - d) Approval of Programme and Secretariat Budget for 1998 & 1999
8. Any Other Business
9. Adoption of the Report
10. Closure of Meeting

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION
HON. MR. SURESH P. PRABHU
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
INDIA**

It is a privilege for me to represent my country at this 7th meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, and an added pleasure that it is being held in this beautiful country.

It was in Islamabad that the Governing Council last met almost three years ago. This long gap is unfortunate. We are friends and neighbours and a small well-knit group. If we are to achieve anything concrete, it must be done at a quickened pace. I suggest that we resume the practice of meeting regularly as we had been doing earlier on.

There have been significant developments related to the environment not only in our region but throughout the world. The most momentous of these was undoubtedly the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Rio de Janeiro was the occasion to stress the right to development, whilst also recognising that if development had to have any real meaning, it should be sustainable. Developing countries faced an uphill task, but we did secure our objective. The Rio Declaration squarely placed the eradication of poverty as a goal central to environmental conservation. Agenda 21 is a blueprint which holds out hope to the developing world, promising benefits in many fields like agriculture, literacy, health, technology, combating desertification and deforestation, management of water resources, oceans and so on, accepting that this is the only way to secure the future well-being of our planet.

Concern for environment has been an integral part of the Indian psyche and social processes from time immemorial and is reflected in the Constitution of India. The Directive Principles of State Policy have enjoined to protect the environment and safeguard the forests and wildlife. Our Constitution provides that it shall be the fundamental duty of every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures. The traditions and sustainable modes of life which have for centuries, nourished the lives of the people of our South Asian countries seem to have extracted a price in a different time when the race for development overtook us leaving some States like ours behind due to a variety of reasons, political and economic. The result has been creation and perpetuation of poverty and low levels of development, accentuated by social conditions of ill health, malnutrition and illiteracy, leading to high rates of population growth.

Independent India has travelled a long way on the path of modernisation and industrialisation. From the very beginning we are committed to the goal of providing a better quality of life to our citizens with better health care, wide-spread education, clean drinking water, housing, etc. Despite our many and varied problems, we have still been able to take very impressive strides in the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of our people, even though much still remains to be done. The economic development that has been achieved has brought in its wake many unwanted consequences with effects on our natural resources. The forest cover has diminished, though marginally. Our rivers are affected by pollution. Mining and other industrial activities have led to the degradation of land and air pollution is a matter of major concern in the urban areas. Our success would be determined in our ability to meet these and other challenges.

Despite a planned approach and commitment of substantial resources for meeting civic needs of our urban areas, the increase of urban population has put tremendous pressure on civic amenities. Management of municipal and industrial waste water as well as solid waste is a matter of urgent concern.

Another area of priority is the energy requirement for the large population of our country. On the one hand we are making our best attempts to supplement the heavy dependence on biomass resources for rural energy and emphasising the importance of a shift from the biomass resources for energy to commercial energy whether from hydel or thermal sources. At the same time keeping in view the major environmental consequences of energy from these sources, we have also taken steps to limit emissions by appropriate environmental impact assessments of projects and the application of environmentally sound technologies.

In spite of the pressure of a growing population, India has committed extensive resources towards conserving its extensive forests and wild life. While nearly one fifth of the total land area is covered by forests, we have before us the objective of achieving a further 1.3 per cent forest cover. Through our widespread network of national parks and sanctuaries we have been successful in the preservation of key species such as the tiger and the elephant, in the face of many difficulties.

All these objectives are well supported by legislative and regulatory measures which are aimed at the preservation and protection of environment. Some of them are the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1974, the Environment (Protection) Act of 1986 and the Forest (Conservation) Act of 1980. Besides the legislative measures, a National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement of Environment and Development, a National Forest Policy and a Policy Statement of Abatement of Pollution has been evolved. We are also in the process of formulation of a National Action Plan on conservation of Biodiversity and a National Environment Policy.

Many important policies and programmes are in force which are geared to the task of protection of the environment. One of the biggest river cleaning programmes in the world has been taken up in our country starting with the Ganga basin and now extended to the entire country in a programme known as the National River Action Programme. The Programme has the objective of improving the water quality of rivers by treating the domestic sewage and industrial effluents before their discharge in the river.

On the issue of air pollution caused by vehicles, government has initiated various programmes such as tightening of emission norms for new vehicles, introduction of cleaner fuels and catalytic converters for vehicles. The programme for the introduction of unleaded petrol and catalytic converters which presently covers only a few cities would be extended to all the cities.

India is also party to various environment related conventions such as the Montreal Protocol on the Ozone Depleting Substances, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biodiversity, Basel Convention on Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and the Convention to Combat Desertification, among others. India has been pursuing its commitments under the various conventions vigorously by initiating various measures nationally and by taking several important initiatives in the region. To name a few, we hosted the First Asian Regional Conference on Desertification in India and the SAARC Environment Ministers Conference.

Answers to our problems are not easy to come by but have to be sought by South Asia along with the rest of the developing world, indeed the whole world. They have to be placed before, and solved through, a medium like the United Nation Commission on Sustainable Development, in which our voices have to be raised with conviction and heard with responsibility. When we have regional co-operation we can be sure that international co-operation cannot be far behind. How can our voice not be heard when we are travelling on the road to development without endangering the world environment even a fraction of the extent to which it has already been jeopardised.

Our national efforts will and should continue, and blend into a constructive regional co-operation. For countries in the same geographical region, sharing related climatic and social conditions, there are many obvious areas where we can work together.

SACEP should harness the enthusiasm of the common man of South Asia. Our populations together constitute one-fourth of humankind. If the voice of South Asia is to be heard in international debates on the environment, we have to continue to display our willingness, capability and responsibility, in co-operating with each constructively; and making our region a model of sustainable development. We have the natural resources and we have the strength and abilities and infinite wisdom of our people. It is for us, now, to provide the vision. We must all work together to strengthen SACEP so that it is in a better position to sustain and continue its programmes and activities.

I thank the Government and the people of Maldives for the warm welcome they have accorded us, and for hosting the Governing Council Meeting. The warmth, affection and efficiency we have experienced here augurs well for the tasks ahead of SACEP.

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE MALDIVIAN DELEGATION
MR. ABDULLAHI MAJEED
DEPUTY MINISTER OF PLANNING, HUMAN RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT,
REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES**

*Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates*

At the outset I would like to acknowledge and thank the outgoing chair, Pakistan for the excellent work carried out in his tenure of office.

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme is now a well recognised institution in our region. Since its very modest foundation in 1982 SACEP has over the past 16 years reached a level of maturity that other similar regional organisations in South Asia has not been able to achieve. The remarkable progress SACEP has achieved in promoting the implementation of environmental policies and programmes since the historic Earth Summit held in 1992 is especially noteworthy. For this I congratulate and thank the Directors and Staff of SACEP Secretariat. I particularly note the additional dynamism and inspiration Mr. Hussain Shihab has provided in his capacity as Director of SACEP, over the last three years. Mr. Shihab has completed his term of office in an exemplary manner and I congratulate him for his excellent achievements during his term. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate the new Director of SACEP, Mr. Ananda Raj Joshi from Nepal and wish him well in fulfilling his duties.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates.

We are currently implementing three very important projects with the assistance of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme.

The first is on strengthening environmental legislation, the second is on strengthening the environmental information management capacity and environmental awareness raising, and the third is on establishing an environmental information system and state of the environment reporting. Allow me to mention here that the progress of these projects is satisfactory. However, we need to give additional boost to complete the implementation of these projects on schedule and we plan to do first that.

I would like to note here that the draft of the State of the Environment Report is now ready and we are consulting with concerned agencies and non-governmental organisations on the report and it is our hope that the final report will be ready by June this year.

Mr. Chairman,

We fully recognise the excellent work South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme is undertaking in the sphere of environmental protection. We reiterate our desire to see the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme fully functional and contributing as it is doing now. At the same time, with a view to full and effective utilisation of existing resources and mobilising extra support and funding for the SACEP activities, we recommend that SACEP build a partnership with the SAARC, the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation. (SAARC) presents a framework for regional co-operation and political commitment at the highest level, that we can utilise for the mutual benefit of both the organisations.

Mr. Chairman,

We have been able to consider all the issues that were put on the agenda of the senior officials meeting and have deliberated and agreed on resolutions that the honourable ministers could consider in the Governing Council. We agree on the need to have a fully functional Secretariat in SACEP and thus understand the dire need to increase the country contributions. We assure you that our Government will give due consideration to these issues and report to the Secretariat as agreed.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding, I would like you to recall the important issues mentioned by our President a few hours ago. His Excellency highlighted beach erosion and the threats of climate change and sea level rise as the two most pressing concerns facing our country. We would thus like to reiterate the need for international assistance in overcoming these issues and request South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme to look into these issues in their future programmes.

Thank You.

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE NEPALESE DELEGATION
H. E. MR. NILAMBER ACHARYA
ROYAL NEPALESE AMBASSADOR TO SRI LANKA
HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL

Your Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me great pleasure to attend this important meeting of the Seventh Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and to present the country statement on behalf of the Nepalese delegation. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the Government of Maldives for the warm welcome extended to me and the member of the delegation and also for the excellent arrangement for our comfortable stay in Bandos.

It is indeed a matter of great satisfaction that this meeting is taking place at a time when there is growing global concern for environmental preservation and promotion of sustainable development. I also feel that it's now an appropriate time for all of us, also as the signatories of the declarations of the Rio Earth Summit, to retrospect into our efforts and achievements in implementing Agenda 21 and in keeping up our commitment to the spirit of preserving the mother earth. In this regard, the valuable guidelines contained in the address of His Excellency the President of the Maldives are worthy of serious consideration.

In Nepal, formulation and endorsement of the Nepal Environmental Policy Action Plan (NEPAP) was a major step taken in keeping with the nation's commitment to maintaining a balance between environment and development. The NEPAP, which was prepared with a serious consideration of the Rio declarations and the Agenda 21, well reflects the Government's approach of integrating environment concerns with the development activities. The policy actions envisaged in the NEPAP basically intend to promote sustainable development, which we, as a developing nation, think to be the best compromise with the urgency of preserving environment while striving for economic progress.

The major environmental challenges facing us are broadly rural and urban in their characteristics. Deforestation, soil erosion, loss of bio-resources and the resulting degradation of mountain ecosystem are prevalent in the rural areas. Air and water pollution compounded by unhygienic sanitation in the urban areas which is growing with the unplanned urban sprawl and industrialisation has health implications for the urban people. In addition, widespread poverty associated with high rate of unemployment has greatly contributed to the growing environmental degradation in the country. We thus see a close link between poverty and environment and realise the need of tackling them together.

In the Ninth Five Year Plan, the major thrust has been given to poverty alleviation and employment generation. Policies have been clearly chalked out to institutionalise the Initial Environmental Examination and Environmental Impact Assessment process for development projects with the main aim of minimising damage to natural, socio economic and cultural environment of both the rural and urban societies. To provide a big thrust to this process, an emphasis has been given to the people's participation in development process.

Some of the major policy initiative that have been enunciated in the ninth plan relate mainly to promoting carrying capacity based resource utilisation, combating all forms of urban environmental pollution, integrating environmental education with the school curriculum and ensuring participation of womenfolk and the youth at the local level in environmental activities.

In recent years, the establishment of the Ministry of Population and Environment with the mandate to work towards preserving environment and promoting sustainable development, and the enforcement of the Environment Protection Act and Regulations have been two landmark achievements. The Act and the Regulations are now in the process of being enforced with the objective of preserving environment at its best possible state and to promote sustainable approach to development efforts. The key features of the Act/Regulations are, among others, the provisions for institutionalisation of Initial Environmental Examination and Environmental Impact Assessment process and pollution control mechanisms, and those for conservation of ecologically and culturally sensitive sites.

As a member country, we are well aware of our share of role and responsibility to enable SACEP to function more effectively towards environmental preservation at the regional level and thereby be instrumental in helping its member countries to act on Agenda 21 and contribute positively to the global environment. It would also be highly commendable if a major thrust is given to the preservation of fragile mountain ecosystem, the indigenous people and practices, and sound and sustainable resources management for the alleviation of poverty prevalent in this region.

In conclusion we wish to recognise the many contributions made by Mr. Hussain Shihab as Director of SACEP and the staff of SACEP secretariat. We would like to place on record the sincere appreciation of His Majesty's Government of Nepal for the assistance and co-operation extended by the International Agencies, Norwegian Government and others for carrying out the mandate of SACEP. We would also like to assure to the distinguished delegates and SACEP Secretariat that His Majesty's Government will provide full support to implement the programme and activities of SACEP.

We once again thank the Government of Maldives for successfully convening this meeting and wish heartily for the great success of the SACEP in the years ahead in promoting and existing understanding and co-operation among its member nations for a bright future for all.

Thank you!

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE PAKISTAN DELEGATION
HON. SYED ASGHAR ALI SHAH
MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOUSING AND WORKS
ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN**

Mr. Chairman

It is indeed an honour for me to represent Pakistan at the Seventh meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), here in Male. We are thankful to the Republic of Maldives for hosting this meeting in this beautiful island state. We hope and pray that the pristine environment of this beautiful country lives forever and enhanced for the welfare and benefit of the people of Maldives. We are also enjoying the hospitality extended to us by the Government of Maldives since our arrival in this capital city. The SACEP Secretariat has also done excellent work in preparing documents for this Council meeting and in this regard I must appreciate the leadership and the guidance provided to the SACEP by its Director Mr. Hussain Shihab of the Republic of Maldives. I also welcome the new Director of SACEP Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi from Nepal who will succeed Mr. Hussain Shihab.

Mr. Chairman

Pakistan has the honour and privilege of being associated with SACEP since its inception. We have been supporting this organisation and benefiting from its programmes of activities both at the regional and the national level. Recently, a joint UNEP/ NORAD / SACEP team led by Mr. Hussain Shihab visited Pakistan and we agreed on a number of very important and significant activities in Pakistan in association with SACEP. These include Strengthening of Environmental Legislation, Public Awareness and Education, Environmental Law and Policy Development, Effective Implementation of key Environmental Conventions and Human Resources Development. We are especially looking forward to a conference on the Role of Judiciary in Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Development in Pakistan. To this end an important meeting has already taken place between Chief Justice of Pakistan and SACEP Secretariat. We stand to this commitment.

Mr. Chairman,

South Asia is a unique Region with rich history and culture. Its people are hard working and energetic. However, their full potential has not been exploited due to financial and institutional constraints. Poverty is still rampant and its environment continues to degrade despite the natural resource base, namely land, water and vast oceans. Several activities and initiatives at the regional level can meaningfully complement and support our national efforts to prevent degradation of our natural environment and up root the scourge of poverty and deprivation from the region. SACEP is an ideal institution to provide leadership in this regard. It must emerge as a credible institution of standing at the regional level to which national and global environmental organisations must look up. The member countries must provide resources and support to enable SACEP assume this role. We hope that programmes of activities now under consideration of the Governing Council provides useful framework in the achievement of this objectives. I hope my fellow colleagues from the South Asian Countries will accord their approval to this programme of work.

Mr. Chairman,

At the national level, Pakistan has taken a number of measures to establish and strengthen its programme activities in the field of environmental management. A comprehensive Pakistan Environmental Protection Act has been enacted which all political parties unanimously supported. It will enable us to establish an apex Pakistan Environmental Protection Council under the Prime Minister of Pakistan drawing membership from Government, industry, business and academic. We are closely working with the industry for the enforcement of National Environmental Quality Standards and Establishment of Sustainable Development Fund, Designation of Environmental Magistrate and Environmental Tribunals and on expanded

Programme of Mass Awareness and Environmental Education for full involvement of government and civil society in this common endeavour. We will request SACEP to support all these activities especially in the exchange of information, establishment of a network of institutions of environment and sharing experience of good practices on environment. We may also maintain a roster of experts to help countries of the region.

Mr. Chairman.

Protection and Preservation of Environment is our moral duty, not only for the present but the future generation. It requires concerted actions at the local, national, regional and global level. We will continue to work to bring required synergy at the local level. To this end, we will support SACEP and its Secretariat in whatever way needed to effectively respond to the environmental challenges.

I wish the deliberations of this meeting all success.

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE SRI LANKA DELEGATION
HON. MR. NANDIMITRA EKANAYAKE
MINISTER OF FORESTRY & ENVIRONMENT
SRI LANKA**

*Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates.*

This statement entails important actions undertaken by Sri Lanka during the past few years in relation to the protection, management and enhancement of the environment.

1. Sri Lanka has prepared the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) in 1991 and has updated it for the period 1995 – 1998. During that period, Ministry in charge of the Environment was able to launch the first project out of NEAP in 1996 as Environmental Action 1 Project with assistance received from the World Bank under a soft loan. It is being successfully implemented at present and has considered the institutional strengthening and capacity building of the Environment Division of the Ministry and the Central Environmental Authority. It has also taken into account the land degradation in the hill country. One other aspect of the project is encouraging the NGO's involved in conservation activities to join hands with the government to aim at sustainable development with stakeholder participation. During 1997 action was initiated to update the NEAP for a further period from 1998 – 2001.
2. Sri Lanka has well conceived the actions suggested in Agenda 21 and at present taking steps to incorporate them in the National Environmental Action Plan 1998 – 2001. There is much concern in the Country to have a National Agenda 21, which would incorporate actions suggested in Agenda 21.
3. Sri Lanka has built up its capacity on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) over the last 16 years. EIA has been used in Sri Lanka and it was legally mandated for all development projects with significant environmental impact by the National Environmental Act (Amendment) No. 56 of 1988. The need to provide a legal framework for EIA and the training of a cadre of professionals in EIA were recognised in Sri Lanka. US AID extended support for this purpose by launching the Natural Resources and Environmental Policy Project (1991 – 1997) under a grant. The EIA process is mandated for the prescribed projects which need to be approved by the Project Approving Agencies (PAA). The Minister in charge of Environment decides on the list of prescribed projects and designates appropriate state agencies as Project Approving Agencies. The first two orders and regulations were published on 23rd June 1993 and designated 14 State Agencies as PAA.

The Agencies responsible for National Planning, Energy, Housing, Irrigation, Forestry, Lands, Industries, Construction, Highways, Transport, Fisheries, Plantation Industries, Coast Conservation, Wild Life Conservation, Urban Development, Mahaweli, Tourist Board, Board of Investment, Geological Survey and Mines, Central Environmental Authority are designated by these orders. However, it could be stated that relying on state agencies to carry out effective compliance with the conditions laid down has not been that successful with regard to cases where one state agency has to take action against another state agency. Nevertheless it can be stated that EIA process is fully activated in the project development and approval in Sri Lanka at present.

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates.

4. With regard to polluting industries of Sri Lanka an Environmental Protection License (EPL) issued by Central Environmental Authority is required for the discharge or emission of pollutants to the environment under National Environment Act, 1988. The EPL process begins with an application from the industry one month prior to the commencement of operations. In order to avoid waste of resources, Central Environmental Authority has developed a site clearance procedure for industries to obtain building approvals to minimise refusal of EPL after the completion of construction. The site clearance procedure decides early the possibility of issuing an EPL for the industry. The local authorities have been designated with power to issue the EPL's for certain types of polluting activities. Two orders of delegation were effective from 1st January 1994 and 1st July 1996. This procedure has necessitated to ascertain whether the agencies, which the power is delegated, has the institutional capacity to implement the processes. With regard to the devolution of power to the provincial councils, they have the authority to legislate on matters specified to the Provinces. However subject of environment is in the concurrent list and the Provincial list which makes it possible for the Parliament and the Provincial Council to pass legislation.
5. The need for environmental safeguards is included in the constitution of Sri Lanka (1978) under Article 27, which states that the state shall protect, preserve and improve the environment for the benefit of the community. It is noted elsewhere in the constitution that every person in Sri Lanka has duty and obligation to protect the nature and conserve its riches. The National Environment Act No. 47 of 1980 and amendment No. 56 of 1988 and regulations are in force in Sri Lanka under NEA and there are regulations that are being drafted at present on Hazardous Wastes, Noise Pollution etc.
6. Environmental education in Sri Lanka has gradually developed in the tertiary educational institutes. Number of university education programmes cover environment as a general subject and only a limited number of courses specialised in aspects related to environment. Some of them are environmental economics, environmental engineering, environmental Science, environmental law and natural resource management. Two other related subject areas are forestry management and wild life management. University of Moratuwa offers Post Graduate Diploma Courses and Master Degree Courses in Environmental Engineering and Environmental Management. University of Colombo, offers Post Graduate Diploma and Masters Degrees in Environmental Science. University of Peradeniya offers Masters Degrees in Environmental Economics and Natural Resources Management. Centre for Environmental Studies has a certificate course in Environmental Awareness. There is a tendency that more and more students enroll for these courses. Ministry of Environment has taken action to create an awareness among the school children on conservation of environment with the assistance of the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates.

7. Sri Lanka has ratified the Biodiversity Convention, Basel Convention on Hazardous Wastes, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, Convention on Climate Change and the Montreal Protocol on Ozone depleting substances. Ministry has established National Co-ordinating Committee for all these conventions and activities are in place for each sector. For instance Biodiversity Action Plan is being formulated with the support of IUCN. Specific regulations are being formulated for Hazardous Wastes and the use of Ozone depleting substances.
8. The Colombo Environmental Improvement Project has been launched with the assistance of the World Bank to address the solid waste disposal problems, maintenance of Beira Lake and the industrial waste water treatment issues. There is a separate project to improve the Colombo canals with the assistance of OECF funds for the environment improvement and flood protection in the city of Colombo. The UDA with the co-operation of the local bodies are implementing an urban sector development project which addresses the environmental issues especially

garbage collection, sanitary facilities and drainage. A project proposal is being studied and a Pilot Project is being implemented with the assistance of the World Bank to improve environment of the low income settlements in Colombo.

9. Under a joint programme of assistance from UNEP, SACEP and NORAD a number of environment related activities were commenced in 1997. The six sub components of this programme relate to:-

- a) The development of regulations, guidelines criteria to operationalise the draft Environmental Law.
- b) The preparation of model statute for the use of Provincial Councils.
- c) The establishment of a transparent and participatory process for the setting up of environmental standards and support for its work.
- d) Preparation of State of Environment Report.
- e) Environment Awareness Programme
- f) Training in Environmental Law and Institutional Arrangement.

The objective of this programme was to strengthen the legislative framework necessary for sustainable development and to promote environmental awareness among the younger generation. It is also planned to establish a forum for developing environment rules and regulations and standards to look after the interests of stakeholders.

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates.

SACEP has been instrumental in activating issues relating to the management and development of environment in Sri Lanka from the inception in 1982. I am very pleased to state here that Sri Lanka has been fortunate to host the SACEP Secretariat and receive its support for environmental programmes over the years. Also, I am happy to place on record that Sri Lanka has honoured her obligations in respect of hosting facilities to the tune of Rs 2.1 million or US \$ 33,000 and country contribution of US \$ 8,800 annually. Sri Lanka will be prepared to favourably consider further enhancement as proposed on the basis that the other member countries would also reciprocate.

I finally wish all success to this 7th Governing Council Meeting and SACEP Activities.

**STATEMENT BY DR. SUVIT YOOMANZ
DIRECTOR & REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME- REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
BANGKOK, THAILAND**

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Kakar the UNDP Resident Representative in Maldives has asked me to speak on behalf of UNEP & UNDP on this occasion. Permit me to join the Honourable Ministers and Ambassadors of the South Asian Countries in congratulating you for having been appointed as Chairman of this 7th Governing Council Meeting.

I would like to take the floor to outline very briefly the extremely successful programme of activities that UNEP has carried out in partnership with the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. Through these programmes of activities we have succeeded in consolidating a very fruitful and enduring partnership with SACEP, pooling our respective comparative advantages and developing and implementing needs-responsive activities in the environment field.

Following the request from member governments UNEP has assisted in the establishment of SACEP's Environmental and Natural Resources Information Centre (SENRIC). SENRIC has been effective in dissemination of tools for environment assessment. Other areas of cooperation include environmental law, capacity building including training, Implementation of environmental conventions and Regional Seas Action Plan.

Strengthening legal and institutional arrangements for pursuing the goals of sustainable development and the implementation of environmental conventions is the most recent area of cooperation between UNEP and SACEP. This is indeed a crucial area of importance to countries in the region and requests for international co-operation in this field have been repeatedly made by governments within and outside the South Asia region. As has been reaffirmed in both Agenda 21 and decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, at national levels, environmental laws and regulations constitute the principal instrument of translating environmental and developmental policies conceived in the context of sustainable development into action. It is often the legal development process itself that serves as the first occasion for developing an appropriate policy framework through a consultative and participatory process.

At the international level, of course, environmental law is the mechanism by which global and regional consensus is forged on ways of addressing international environmental concerns. A characteristic feature of the joint SACEP-UNEP programme is its reliance on national and regional expertise complemented, where necessary, by expertise from outside the region. Within the framework of this joint programme of work funded by the Royal Norwegian Government with a grant made through NORAD, we have held two Regional activities, - a Workshop on Implementation of Environmental Conventions and the South Asia Judges Symposium on the Role of the Judiciary in Promoting the Goals of Sustainable Development. Three environmental law publications have already been published; one is in print, and two more are currently being developed for publication later in the year. Several country level activities have also been held to develop national environmental legislation in Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and country level national workshops on environmental law are planned to be held in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan later this year.

The adoption of the South Asia Regional Seas Action Plan and the designation of the SACEP Secretariat as the Secretariat of the Programme is yet another milestone in SACEP - UNEP collaboration. In partnership with ROAP and the Water Division of UNEP, a Workshop was organised and conducted by SACEP on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action on Land-based Sources of pollution in the South Asian Seas. Further joint activities are also planned under this programme, including the Development of Training Manuals for Regional Training for the Management of Protected Areas and Coral

Island Ecosystems, Finalisation of an Oil Pollution Contingency Plan, and activities in the field of Integrated Coastal Zone Management. Other areas in which SACEP-UNEP collaboration is moving forward are Capacity Building; Environmental Impact Assessment; Education and Awareness; Floral and Faunal Biodiversity; and Forests.

In 1996, UNEP's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific organised the Annual Environmental Management Seminar in partnership with SACEP, which, apart from providing an opportunity for senior government officials from the SACEP countries to exchange views and develop common approaches to addressing national and regional environmental problems, learning from each other's experience, also resulted in the publication of a very useful regional publication on a number of key issues relating to environmental management. As follow up to this Seminar, UNEP and SACEP are planning in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan to hold the 1998 South Asian Regional Environmental Seminar in Pakistan later in the year.

Air Pollution and its effects are major concern in South Asia. With agreement of member governments UNEP will assist SACEP to implement a new programme on air pollution in 1998.

UNEP & UNDP have had extensive discussions on strengthening collaboration between us and will work together to assist the South Asian Countries and SACEP in the future. Both of our organisations have assisted and continues to assist this region in matters related to environmental protection requirements.

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers and distinguished delegates, these programmes and activities are examples of the joint SACEP - UNEP activities in the South Asia region. In conclusion I would like to assure the distinguished representatives of the member countries of SACEP that UNEP will continue to collaborate with SACEP in strengthening the work that we are currently doing together with Governments in the region, and look forward to expanding our joint programme of work into other areas of concern to the region, and enhancing the effectiveness of our work, in the future.

Finally I would like to thank sincerely SACEP, and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for the very warm hospitality extended to us. We hope very much that this meeting will come to a very productive and successful conclusion.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT BY DR. EL KUBOTA
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION
MALE, REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES**

It is indeed an honour and a privilege for me to represent the World Health Organisation at this important 7th Meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP). Please accept our sincere compliments in organising such a timely and much needed forum of various agencies and governments of the countries of this Region.

It is welcoming to note that with the assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) - which is the prime mover of SACEP, high level discussions at the intergovernmental level were initiated, which eventually culminated in the establishment of SACEP and its ongoing functions.

Within its policy framework, the World Health Organisation has been actively involved in activities related to environmental health in all its Member States. Six Member States of the WHO South East Asia Region, namely, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, come under the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. Following on the principles of the Rio Declaration that "human beings are at the centre of concern for sustainable development, and are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature", and depending on the individual needs of the countries, WHO supports programmes in various areas related to environmental health such as water supply and sanitation in human settlements, environmental health in urban development, assessment of environmental health hazards, promotion of chemical safety and incorporation of health concerns into environmental management.

According to its policy framework, WHO assistance has been directed towards strengthening national capabilities and capacities through assessment of the existing situation, human resource development, environmental health information management, development of water supply and sanitation services, monitoring of air and water quality control, and provision of support to national planning for sustainable development, incorporating health concerns into environmental management.

Under the WHO Health and Environment Initiative, a Regional Consultation was held in Maldives during October 1997 with the participation from the countries of the WHO South East Asia Region and international agencies, including SACEP. Based on the recommendations of this Consultation, almost all the Member States are at the stage of finalisation of a National Health and Environment Action Plan for their respective countries.

WHO has, in co-ordination with SACEP, and through its Panel of Experts on Environmental Management for Vector Control (PEEM), financed a pilot study in Sri Lanka to assess the magnitude and problems of vector borne diseases control and the effects of geological changes resulting from small-scale water resources development projects. Similar projects may be initiated in other member countries, depending on the final evaluation of this pilot study.

In addition, under the directives of His Excellency President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, and based on the WHO "Healthy Cities" concept, Maldives is progressing ahead with gradually developing, initially one atoll in each region, as a "Healthy Atoll". In due course of time, it is aimed at developing all the atolls as "Healthy Atolls". This is an encouraging step forward for sustainable development of Health and Environment, containing all the important elements and components, starting from policy formulation, planning, management, quality control and monitoring and evaluation.

For the effective implementation of the Health and Environment concepts, there is a need for increased inter-sectoral, inter-governmental, and inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination at all stages and all levels.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Organisation, let me assure you that WHO is willing, and confirms its participation and co-operation to co-ordinate with all those concerned in making the Health and Environment Initiative a successful and sustainable essential component of the National Environment Programmes of the Member Countries.

Once again, I would like to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to SACEP and the organisers of this important meeting for inviting WHO to participate in this 7th Governing Council Meeting. I wish you every success in your deliberations and interactions in coming up with recommendations and action points, which are acceptable, affordable and replicable.

Thank you.

**Malé Declaration on
Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and
Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia**

Recognizing the potential for increase in air pollution and consequential phenomena due to concentration of pollutant gases, acid rain or acid deposition as well as the impacts on the health of humans and other living organisms in all our countries due to man made and natural causes; and also

Recognizing the potential for increase in transboundary air pollution as a corollary of air pollution in each country; and

Realising that the potential for air pollution increase and its transboundary effects will accumulate in the absence of national measures to abate and prevent such potential; and

Reiterating in this context Principle 21 of the UN Declaration on the Human Environment in 1972 which stated that States have, in accordance with the charter of the United Nations and the principle of international laws, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;

Keeping in mind that need for constant study and monitoring of the trends in air pollution with a view to understand the extent of our potential for damage to the environment and health in the member countries and taking consequential measures to strengthen and build capacity for such activities;

Stressing the need for development and economic growth that will help build up the quality of life and incomes of all the people of all the region, in particular the poorer sections of the population, having due regard to the need to have a clean and healthy environment;

Emphasising that air pollution issues have to be analysed and managed in the wider framework of human and sustainable development within each country and within the region; and

Drawing from the experience of co-operation in the region in matters like cultural exchange and also from the experience in other regions like Europe and sub-regions of Asia like ASEAN and East Asia.

We declare that countries of this region will initiate and/or carry forward programmes in each country to

1. Assess and analyse the origin and causes, nature, extent and effects of local and regional air pollution, using the in-house in identified institutions, universities, colleges etc., building up or enhancing capacities in them where required;
2. Develop and/or adopt strategies to prevent and minimise air pollution;
3. Work in co-operation with each other to set up monitoring arrangements beginning with the study of sulphur and nitrogen and volatile organic compounds emissions, concentrations and deposition;

4. Co-operate in building up standardised methodologies to monitor phenomena like acid depositions and analyse their impacts without prejudice to the national activities in such fields;
5. Take up the aforesaid programmes and training programmes which involves the transfer of financial resources and technology and work towards securing incremental assistance from bilateral and multilateral sources;
6. Encourage economic analysis that will help arriving at optimal results
7. Engage other key stakeholders for example industry, academic institutions, NGOs, communities and media etc. in the effort and activities.

We also declare that we shall constantly endeavor to improve national reporting systems and strengthen scientific and academic effort in the understanding and tackling of air pollution issues.

We further declare that we shall continue this process in stages with mutual consultation to draw up and implement national and regional action plans and protocols based on a fuller understanding of transboundary air pollution issues.

We declare that in pursuit of the above, we shall evolve, as appropriate, institutional structures at the national level, including networking, both for the purposes of policy and the technical requirements, and we shall use the good offices of regional, international bilateral and multilateral agencies in this, as appropriate.

APPROVED SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 1998

| | | | INCOME | EXPENDITURE |
|----|-----------------------|--|---------|-------------|
| | | | US\$ | US\$ |
| 1. | ANTICIPATED INCOME | | | |
| | 1.1 | Pledged Country Contributions | | |
| | | BANGLADESH | 7,350 | |
| | | BHUTAN | 1,450 | |
| | | INDIA | 35,250 | |
| | | MALDIVES | 4,400 | |
| | | NEPAL | 2,950 | |
| | | PAKISTAN | 23,500 | |
| | | SRI LANKA | 8,800 | |
| | 1.2 | Interest Earned (FCBU A/C) | 5,00 | |
| | 1.3 | Secretariat Costs from Sri Lanka | 35,000 | |
| | | TOTAL INCOME | 119,200 | |
| 2. | ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE | | | |
| | 2.1 | Salary of Director | | 34,920 |
| | 2.2 | Salaries of Other International Officers | | 19,200 |
| | 2.3 | Salaries of Local Staff | | 14,325 |
| | 2.4 | International Travel | | 20,000 |
| | 2.5 | Secretariat Costs | | 43,000 |
| | | SUB TOTAL | | 131,445 |
| | | Capital Costs | | 17,500 |
| | | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | 148,945 |
| 3. | INCOME/EXPENDITURE | | | (29,745) |

**APPROVED SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 1999
BASED ON A FULLY OPERATIONAL SECRETARIAT**

| | | INCOME US\$ | EXPENDITURE US\$ |
|-----------|---|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. | ANTICIPATED INCOME | | |
| | 1.1 Pledged Country Contributions | | |
| | BANGLADESH | 7,350 | |
| | BHUTAN | 1,450 | |
| | INDIA | 35,250 | |
| | MALDIVES | 4,400 | |
| | NEPAL | 2,950 | |
| | PAKISTAN | 23,500 | |
| | SRI LANKA | 8,800 | |
| | 1.2 Interest Earned (FCBU A/C) | 1,000 | |
| | 1.3 Secretariat Costs from Sri Lanka | 36,665 | |
| | TOTAL INCOME | 121,365 | |
| 2. | ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE | | |
| | 2.1 Salary of Director | | 42,000 |
| | 2.2 Salaries of Other International Officers | | 24,000 |
| | 2.3 Salaries of Local Staff | | 23,900 |
| | 2.4 International Travel | | 20,000 |
| | 2.5 Secretariat Costs | | 58,000 |
| | SUB TOTAL | | 167,900 |
| | Capital Costs | | 17,500 |
| | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | 185,400 |
| 3. | INCOME/EXPENDITURE | | (64,035) |

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

PREPARATORY MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS FOR 7TH GC MEETING

20TH - 21ST APRIL 1998

MALE, MALDIVES

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. The Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials to the Seventh Governing Council Meeting was held on 20th and 21st April 1998 at Bandos Island Resort, Republic of Maldives.
2. It was convened in order to discuss all substantive issues concerning the Administrative, Programme and Financial Matters of SACEP. It was also agreed that the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials on the various Agenda items would form the basis of discussion of the Seventh Governing Council Meeting of Ministers.

ATTENDANCE

3. The Meeting was attended by Representatives from the following Member Countries: - India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
4. It was also attended by Observers from the following UN Agencies and International Organisations: - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) & World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

The List of Participants is in **Annex 1**.

OPENING OF MEETING

5. In their opening addresses Hon Mr. Abdullahi Majeed, Deputy Minister of Planning, Human Resources and Environment, Government of Maldives and Mr. Hussain Shihab, Director SACEP welcomed the delegates and outlined the tasks to be accomplished. Director SACEP also thanked the Government of Maldives for the excellent arrangements and generous host facilities provided to the delegates.

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS & COUNTRY STATEMENTS

6. In conformity with the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council of SACEP, the following Office Bearers were elected.

| | | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------------------|---|-----------|
| Chairman | - | Hon. Mr. Abdullahi Majeed | - | Maldives |
| Vice Chairmen | - | Mrs. Mira Mehrishi | - | India |
| | - | Mr. K. A. S. Gunasekera | - | Sri Lanka |
| Rapporteur | - | Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi | - | Nepal |

ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

7. The Draft Agenda prepared by the Secretariat for this Meeting was adopted. The adopted Agenda is contained in Annex 2. The delegates also agreed on the working hours of the meeting.

STATEMENTS BY UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES, INTERNATIONAL / REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND AID CONSORTIA

8. Under this Agenda item, the representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Environment Assessment Programme for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/EAP/AP) made brief statements.

INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

a) SACEP Secretariat

9. Under this Agenda item, the Director SACEP introduced the document SACEP / MSO / GC 6 / WP 1 titled "Note from the Secretariat on Institutional Matters of the SACEP Secretariat". The paper outlined the role of the Secretariat in relation to its objectives in the implementation of the programme activities of SACEP.
10. He said that SACEP with small beginnings in 1981 has now reached adolescence. Over the last 17 years it has grown in stature in programme coverage and regional and international co-operation. He also said that with the increase in the workload there is an urgent need to strengthen the Secretariat especially in the area of programme support.
11. The Director SACEP said that due to inflation, the local costs of running the Secretariat has increased tremendously but the increase in host facilities was not adequate to meet this increased cost. He appealed to the Government of Sri Lanka for enhanced host facilities.
12. He also pointed out that with the increase in programme activities there was a need to find more office space. He also pointed out the need for a permanent building to house the Secretariat. He said the offer of finding a piece of land for the Secretariat was made by the Government of Sri Lanka at the 1st Governing Council Meeting in 1983. He said if this be made available, the Secretariat could seek funding for the construction of a permanent Secretariat Building.
13. The Director briefly outlined the reasons for raising the status of the Director to that of Director-General with DPL facilities.
14. The meeting was fully appreciative of the fact that there is an urgent need to strengthen the SACEP Secretariat in order that it could fulfil its obligations in serving the member countries.
15. The delegate from Sri Lanka agreed that it is a moral obligation on the part of his government to ensure that they provide adequate host facilities to the Secretariat. He promised to take up this matter with the concerned authorities. On the question of allocating a piece of land for constructing a Secretariat, he said that his hands would be strengthened if SACEP had a definite proposal such as building plan and a strategy for raising funds for construction. The meeting decided to request Director of SACEP to prepare an accepted plan for the new SACEP Headquarters and plans for financing within 6 months and forward same for submission to the Government of Sri Lanka.

16. All countries were of the view that the status of the Director should be elevated to that of the Director - General. The host country Representative said that he would like to respond favourably to the request made for granting diplomatic privileges to the Director General of SACEP equivalent to that of Ambassador / High Commissioner and that he would pursue the matter in accordance with the diplomatic procedures.

b) SUBJECT AREA AND COUNTRY FOCAL POINTS

17. The Meeting of Senior Officials considered the Working Document (SACEP / MSD / GC 7 / WP 2) on this subject, prepared by the SACEP Secretariat which was presented by the Director.
18. It was brought to the notice of the meeting that the Articles of Association of SACEP provide for the designation of Subject Area Focal Points which are expected to co-operate with the Secretariat in Programme Implementation. The present 15 Subject Area Focal Points were designated in 1981 at the first Ministerial Meeting with the consent of the concerned countries with member countries assuming responsibilities for one or more such Subject Areas. These Subject Areas covered almost all major areas of concern at that time in the field of Environmental Protection and Management in the SACEP Region.
19. The Director said that at present for a variety of reasons, two of the Subject Areas do not have designated Focal Points and this has to be rectified.
20. He said that for the functioning of the Focal Points, the Second Governing Council had approved the Modalities of Focal Points which cover key areas namely: Initiation of Project Proposals by the Subject Area Focal Points; Formulation of Project Documents with Consultative Committee approval and submission of Project Documents for funding to Donor Agencies by the Secretariat; Project Implementation, use of National Expertise and Institutions and Liaison Activities.
21. It was also stated that the majority of the Subject Area Focal Points had not fulfilled their expected role. Therefore their usefulness should be reviewed and this meeting would have to make recommendations to the Seventh Governing Council as to how these Focal Points could be revitalised.
22. After a detailed discussion the meeting felt that some of these subject areas were no longer relevant and that a revision of the SACEP's Subject Areas should be undertaken especially in line with Agenda 21.
23. A small working group deliberated on this matter and they agreed upon a revised list of Subject Areas.
24. The meeting agreed to submit to the Seventh Governing Council the revised list for formal ratification. The revised list of Subject Area Focal Points is given below:

| | Priority Subject Area | Country |
|-----|--|------------|
| 1. | Conservation of Biodiversity | India |
| 2. | Sustainable Tourism Development | Maldives |
| 3. | Management of Coral Island Ecosystems | Maldives |
| 4. | Management of Fresh Water Resources | Bangladesh |
| 5. | Desertification | Pakistan |
| 6. | Environmental Legislation | India |
| 7. | Participatory Forest Management | Nepal |
| 8. | Sustainable Agriculture and Land Use | Sri Lanka |
| 9. | Sustainable Human Settlements Development | Sri Lanka |
| 10. | Waste Management | India |
| 11. | Science & Technology for Sustainable Development | Pakistan |
| 12. | Education & Training | India |
| 13. | Energy & Environment | India |
| 14. | Air Pollution | Pakistan |

25. It was also agreed that the Subject Area Focal Points be requested by the Environmental Ministries of the respective member countries to formulate Regional Projects on their subject area and to make them available to the Secretariat by 1st October 1998.
26. It was also agreed that country Focal Points should be called upon to nominate National Level Institutions which would function as the Subject Area Focal Points as soon as possible

PROGRAMME MATTERS

a) PROGRESS OF PROGRAMME AND PROJECT ACTIVITIES

27. Introducing this Agenda Item, the Director SACEP presented a comprehensive Review of Programmes and Projects undertaken by SACEP (Working Document SACEP / MSO / GC 7 / WP 3). The significance and the importance of the programmes undertaken by SACEP were highlighted in his presentation.
28. The delegates expressed their satisfaction that despite constraints in manpower and finances the performance of the Secretariat was more than satisfactory. They emphasised their appreciation for the work done by the Secretariat in implementation of programmes between the 6th and 7th Governing Councils and noted that this had been the period in which most number of projects had been implemented by SACEP for the benefit of the member countries as well as the region as a whole.
29. The meeting also noted that the programmes formulated for the future and projects currently being implemented were in line with Agenda 21 and the felt needs of the member countries. It was also noted that the projects that are being implemented have been determined at the request of the member countries.
30. Also under this agenda item, UNEP made a brief presentation on the challenges for South Asia in the area of air pollution.
31. The meeting noted that member governments of SACEP had agreed in principle to a draft "South Asian Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Transboundary Effects" on 20th March 1998. The copy of this declaration is given in Annex 3.
32. The meeting authorised the Director of SACEP to release the Declaration and implement the proposed programme by 1st June 1998 subject to positive response from remaining member states.

b) INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

33. The basis for discussion under this topic was the working document SACEP 1 MSO/ GC 71 WP 4 titled "Review of International Co-operation" prepared by the Secretariat which highlighted the collaborative activities of SACEP with the UN, International and Other Organisations on Programme Matters. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to them for supporting of SACEP activities and hoped that such support would continue.
34. The meeting was specially appreciative of the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD), UNEP and UNEP / EAP / AP for their generous programme support both financially and technically. It also noted the assistance and support given by ADB and ESCAP.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

35. The Meeting reviewed the Financial Position of SACEP including the Country Contributions made by the Member States to the SACEP Secretariat (Working Document SACEP / MSO / GC 7 / WP 5).

a) **COUNTRY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBER STATES FOR SACEP SECRETARIAT**

36. The Director in introducing this working paper said that the 4 main sources of anticipated income of SACEP are: (a) Country Contributions on the agreed scale of assessment (b) Hosting Facilities provided by the Government of Sri Lanka which include Director's Residence, SACEP Office and Supporting Services mutually agreed upon (c) Project Funding by bilateral and multilateral Donor/ Funding Agencies and (d) SACEP Trust Fund.
37. He said that the total country contributions envisaged at the time the formula was last revised was US \$ 121,900. The total Country Contributions received in 1997 amounted to US \$ 54,015, leaving a shortfall of US \$ 67,885. All expenses in respect of institutional, organisational and co-ordinating functions of SACEP have to be met from Country Contributions. This shortfall means that the Secretariat has been functioning at around half its potential capacity.
38. The Government of Sri Lanka has generously contributed towards hosting facilities without any break or shortfall. Sri Lanka's contribution for Hosting facilities now stands at Sri Lankan Rs 2.1 million or US \$ 35,000 (at the current exchange rate of Rs. 60 to the US \$). Also, all Sri Lanka's country contributions have been honoured.
39. The Director said that lately the Secretariat has been able to mobilise project funding from bilateral and multilateral Donor Agencies. However due to lack of competent technical and programme staff and support services and inadequate office space the full potential remains underutilised.
40. Under these circumstance the Director requested the meeting to consider the member countries who had not yet honoured their commitments in full to honour their pledges in full and also settle the arrears as soon as possible. An appeal was also made to the Sri Lanka Government to consider granting an annual increase of funds for Hosting Facilities equivalent to the previous year's rate of inflation.
41. The Director also brought to the notice of the meeting that the 4th Governing Council Meeting in 1988 approved the Budget for a fully operational Secretariat and based on this a Country Contribution Formula was agreed upon. However since then, contributions from Afghanistan and Iran have not been forthcoming. In addition, some countries have yet to fulfil their pledged contributions.
42. He said that a revised contribution chart based on the same formula has been proposed by the Secretariat but this time it has taken into consideration only the contributing states. In this proposed chart, the shortfall of the expected contributions from Afghanistan (4.17%) and Iran (25%) has been redistributed. The proposed chart of Country Contributions is given below.
43. Based on the UN formula and modified on the SAARC formula, wherein the maximum limit of a country contribution being 25%, the revised country contributions will be as follows. For this exercise the total funding considered was US \$ 127,400.

REVISED COUNTRY CONTRIBUTION CHART

| MEMBER STATE | PERCENTAGE | CONTRIBUTION IN US \$ | ROUNDED OFF IN US \$ |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| BANGLADESH | 16.72 | 21,301 | 21,300 |
| BHUTAN | 2.79 | 3,554 | 3,555 |
| INDIA | 25.00 | 31,850 | 31,850 |
| MALDIVES | 11.44 | 14,575 | 14,575 |
| NEPAL | 6.32 | 8,052 | 8,050 |
| PAKISTAN | 25.00 | 31,850 | 31,850 |
| SRI LANKA | 12.73 | 16,218 | 16,220 |
| TOTAL | 100.00 | 127,400 | 127,400 |

44. The meeting looked into other possible avenues for mobilising funds for the Secretariat. The Director said that whilst obtaining funds for programmes was possible, seeking funds for institutional support was very difficult.
45. The meeting agreed on the need to strengthen the Secretariat and that a fully operational Secretariat with the full complement of professional staff would be beneficial to the member countries in the long term.
46. The representative of Sri Lanka appreciated the need to enhance its host facilities and said that he would take up this matter with the concerned authorities and request that in the future the yearly increase in host facilities would be in line with the rate of inflation so that no additional burden will be placed on the Secretariat. He also said that they would look very favourably at the revised country contributions suggested by the Secretariat and would also take this matter up with the concerned authorities.
47. The other delegates too agreed to take up the matter of the revised country contributions with the concerned authorities. It was agreed that the countries who were not yet contributing at the pledged level would report to the Secretariat by 1st August 1998 on the question of its arrears and that all countries would respond by 1st of November 1998 to the request for enhanced contributions from 1st January 1999.

b) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TRUST FUND OF SACEP

48. The meeting reviewed the background documentation presented by the Secretariat on the Establishment of a Trust Fund for SACEP Secretariat (Working Document SACEP / MSO / GC 7 / WP 6).
49. The Director said that a strong institutional framework at the SACEP Secretariat capable of project identifications formulation, Implementation and evaluation is an essential prerequisite to obtaining project funding from Donor Agencies. The main objective of the Trust Fund is to build a capital base or reserve for both organisational and programme activities of SACEP. The initial capital has been fixed at US \$ 100,000. Even though generous contributions, were expected from Member countries and Donor Agencies nothing concrete has materialised so far.
50. The SACEP Trust Fund has been launched with a target of US \$ 500,000 to be obtained as voluntary contributions from member countries and other Donor Agencies. So far no such contributions have been received by the Trust Fund other than US \$ 20,000 contributed by SACEP out of savings from Project funding.
51. In view of this it has been proposed that an attempt be made to raise US \$ 100,000 at least initially from member countries based on the UN Scale of Assessment and modified in line with the SAARC Scale of Assessment and the maximum levy of 25 percent per country principle. Over and above this the Seventh Governing Council may consider other ways and means of attracting funds to the Trust Fund.
52. The meeting looked into various means of obtaining the necessary contributions to the SACEP Trust Fund.
53. It was agreed that SACEP should approach bilateral and multilateral funding agencies with a concrete portfolio outlining in detail the aims and functions and activities of SACEP. In this regard the meeting requested the Director to prepare such a portfolio and make it available to possible donor funding agencies. The member governments too were requested to approach such agencies.

c) APPROVAL OF ANNUAL AUDITED REPORT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1996

54. The Annual Audit Report of the Secretariat for 1996 was reviewed by the Meeting. It was agreed that it be recommended to the Governing Council for approval.

d) APPROVAL OF PROGRAMME AND SECRETARIAT BUDGETS FOR 1998 AND 1999

55. The Programme and Secretariat Budgets for 1998 and 1999 which were given as Annexes 4 & 5 in Working Document SACEP / MSO / GC 7 / WP 5 were taken up for discussion under this Agenda item.
56. The Secretariat budgets for 1998 and 1999 had been prepared taking into consideration the actual level of contributions pledged by the member states.
57. The Meeting discussed and recommended to the Governing Council for approval the Draft Secretariat Budgets for 1998 & 1999. The recommended Budgets are given in Annexes 4 & 5 to this Report.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

58. The linkage between SACEP and SAARC was discussed under this Agenda item. It was noted that SAARC is engaged in environmental activities inspite of the fact that the very same Governments of South Asian Countries had mandated SACEP as a Specialised Agency in the field of environment.
59. The Meeting decided to request all member governments to take appropriate measures and steps for the following:
- a) To ensure that SAARC is Informed of SACEP's experience and its wish to collaborate and complement the work of SAARC in the area of environment;
 - b) To ensure that SACEP continues as the premier body on environment in South Asia;
 - c) To request the SAARC Summit to direct the SAARC Secretariat to invite the Director SACEP to make a presentation on its Programmes and Plans at future SAARC Environment Ministers Meetings.
60. The Meeting noted the special vulnerability of some SACEP member countries to the projected Climate Change and Sea Level Rise and requested the SACEP Secretariat to give more attention to the Issue of Climate Change in their future programmes and projects.
61. The Meeting placed on record the Invaluable services rendered to SACEP by the Director Mr. Hussain Shihab. It was recognised that during his tenure of office SACEP had received greater visibility and he had been able to mobilise funding for many projects for SACEP. The Meeting wished him all success in his future endeavours.
62. The Meeting agreed to recommend that Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi who has been nominated by His Majesty's Government of Nepal to succeed Mr. Hussain Shihab be appointed as the Director of SACEP for a period of three years as provided for in Article 7 (a) of the Articles of Association.

ADOPTION OF REPORT

63. The Meeting considered and adopted the Report on 21st April 1998.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

SACEP MEMBERS

INDIA

Mr. Yogeshwar Varma
 Deputy High Commissioner of India in Maldives
 High Commission of India
 Male
 Maldives

Tel 960 - 324 321
 Fax 960 - 324 778

Mrs. Mira Mehra
 Director
 Ministry of Environment & Forests
 Parayavaran Bhavan
 C.G.O. Complex
 Lodi Road
 New Delhi 110003
 India

Tel 91 - 11 - 436 0783
 Fax 91 - 11 - 436 0783

MALDIVES

Mr. Abdullahi Majed
 Deputy Minister of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
 Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
 Ghazee Building
 Male
 Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 3825 / 32 3303
 Fax 960 - 32 7351
 e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Mr. Mohamed Khaleel
 Deputy Director Environmental Affairs
 Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
 Ghazee Building
 Male
 Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 3039
 Fax 960 - 32 7351
 e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Ms. Aiyshath Azima Shakoor
 Legal Officer
 Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
 Ghazee Building
 Male
 Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 0841
 Fax 960 - 32 3919
 e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

Mr. Sinaad Saeed
Assistant Director Programmes
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 31 2485
Fax 960 – 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv / ssaeed@hotmail.com

Mr. Ahmed Ali
Assistant Environment Analyst
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 – 32 4861
Fax 960 – 32 7351
e-mail mphre@dhivehinet.net.mv

NEPAL

Dr. Ananda Raj Joshi
Environmental Expert
Ministry of Population and Environment
Singh Durbar
Kathmandu
His Majesty's Government of Nepal

Tel 977 – 1 – 245 367
Fax 977 – 1 – 242 138

PAKISTAN

Mr. Asaf Khan
Second Secretary & Head of Chancery
High Commission of Pakistan
211 De Saram Place
Colombo 10
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 – 1 – 696 301 – 2
Fax 94 – 1 – 695 780, 685 635

SRI LANKA

Mr. K. A. S. Gunasekera
Secretary
Ministry of Forestry and Environment
82, Sampathpaya
Rajamahwatta Rd
Battaramulla
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 – 1 – 86 6048, 877290, 594766
Fax 94 – 1 – 86 6656 / 502 566

Mrs. Swineetha Malalasekera
Director, Planning
Ministry of Forestry and Environment
82, Sempathaya
Rajamahwatta Rd
Battaramulla
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 88 3098
Fax 94 - 1 - 86 6656

UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Dr. Suwit Yodmani
Director & Regional Representative
United Nations Environment Programme
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
The UN Building
Rajdamnern Avenue
Bangkok 10200
Thailand

Tel 662 - 288 1870
Fax 662 - 280 3829

Mr. Surendra Shrestha
Regional Co-ordinator
Environment Assessment Programme for Asia and the Pacific
Room 304, Outreach Building
Asian Institute of Technology
P. O. Box 4
Klong Luang
Pathumthani 12120
Thailand

Tel 662 - 516 2124
Fax 662 - 516 2125
e-mail surendra@ait.ac.th

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Mr. Narinder Kakar
Resident Representative for Maldives
United Nations Development Programme
UN Building
P. O. Box 2058
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 324 505
Fax 960 - 324 504

Ms. Makiko Koriyama
Programme Officer
United Nations Development Programme
UN Building
P. O. Box 2058
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 4501
Fax 960 - 32 4504
e-mail makiko.koriyama@undp.org

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANISATION

Hon. Abdullahi Majed
Deputy Minister of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ministry of Planning, Human Resources & Environment
Ghaazee Building
Male
Republic of Maldives

Tel 960 - 32 3919
Fax 960 - 32 3919
e-mail mphe@dhivehinet.net.mv

SACEP SECRETARIAT

Mr. Hussain Shihab
Director
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 589 376 / 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369
e-mail hs_sacep@eureka.lk

Mr. Prasanth Dias Abeyegunawardene
Deputy Director Programmes
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 596 442 / 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369
e-mail pd_sacep@eureka.lk

Mr. Pradyumna Kumar Kotta
Project Co-ordinator
SACEP Environmental Natural Resources Information Centre
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 596 443 / 589 787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369
e-mail pk_sacep@eureka.lk

Mr. K. H. J. Wijayadasa
Consultant
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 584 137
Fax 94 - 1 - 589 369

Ms. Marlene Pereira
Deputy Director Administration
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 589787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589369

Mr. Chandana Jayawardena
Secretariat Assistant
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
10 Anderson Road
Colombo 5
Sri Lanka

Tel 94 - 1 - 589787
Fax 94 - 1 - 589369

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**PREPARATORY MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS FOR 7TH GC MEETING
MALE, MALDIVES
20 - 21 APRIL 1998**

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of Office Bearers & Country Statements
3. Adoption of Agenda and Organisation of Work
4. **INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**
 - a) SACEP Secretariat
 - b) Subject Area and Country Focal Points
5. **PROGRAMME MATTERS**
 - a) Progress of Programme and Project Activities
 - b) Review of International Co-operation
6. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**
 - a) Country Contributions from Member States for SACEP Secretariat
 - b) Establishment of Trust Fund for SACEP Programmes
 - c) Approval of Annual Audited Report of Accounts for 1996
 - d) Approval of Programme and Secretariat Budget for 1998 & 1999
7. **Any Other Business**
8. **Adoption of the Report**
9. **Closure of Meeting**

**Malé Declaration on
Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and
Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia**

Recognizing the potential for increase in air pollution and consequential phenomena due to concentration of pollutant gases, acid rain or acid deposition as well as the impacts on the health of humans and other living organisms in all our countries due to man made and natural causes; and also

Recognizing the potential for increase in transboundary air pollution as a corollary of air pollution in each country; and

Realising that the potential for air pollution increase and its transboundary effects will accumulate in the absence of national measures to abate and prevent such potential; and

Reiterating in this context Principle 21 of the UN Declaration on the Human Environment in 1972 which stated that States have, in accordance with the charter of the United Nations and the principle of international laws, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;

Keeping in mind that need for constant study and monitoring of the trends in air pollution with a view to understand the extent of our potential for damage to the environment and health in the member countries and taking consequential measures to strengthen and build capacity for such activities;

Stressing the need for development and economic growth that will help build up the quality of life and incomes of all the people of all the region, in particular the poorer sections of the population, having due regard to the need to have a clean and healthy environment;

Emphasising that air pollution issues have to be analysed and managed in the wider framework of human and sustainable development within each country and within the region; and

Drawing from the experience of co-operation in the region in matters like cultural exchange and also from the experience in other regions like Europe and sub-regions of Asia like ASEAN and East Asia.

We declare that countries of this region will initiate and/or carry forward programmes in each country to

1. Assess and analyse the origin and causes, nature, extent and effects of local and regional air pollution, using the in-house in identified institutions, universities, colleges etc., building up or enhancing capacities in them where required;
2. Develop and/or adopt strategies to prevent and minimise air pollution;
3. Work in co-operation with each other to set up monitoring arrangements beginning with the study of sulphur and nitrogen and volatile organic compounds emissions, concentrations and deposition;

4. Co-operate in building up standardised methodologies to monitor phenomena like acid depositions and analyse their impacts without prejudice to the national activities in such fields;
5. Take up the aforesaid programmes and training programmes which involves then transfer of financial resources and technology and work towards securing incremental assistance from bilateral and multilateral sources;
6. Encourage economic analysis that will help arriving at optimal results
7. Engage other key stakeholders for example industry, academic institutions, NGOs, communities and media etc. in the effort and activities.

We also declare that we shall constantly endeavor to improve national reporting systems and strengthen scientific and academic effort in the understanding and tackling of air pollution issues.

We further declare that we shall continue this process in stages with mutual consultation to draw up and implement national and regional action plans and protocols based on a fuller understanding of transboundary air pollution issues.

We declare that in pursuit of the above, we shall evolve, as appropriate, institutional structures at the national level, including networking, both for the purposes of policy and the technical requirements, and we shall use the good offices of regional, international bilateral and multilateral agencies in this, as appropriate.

SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 1998

| | | INCOME US\$ | EXPENDITURE US\$ |
|-----------|---|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. | ANTICIPATED INCOME | | |
| | 1.1 Pledged Country Contributions | | |
| | BANGLADESH | 7,350 | |
| | BHUTAN | 1,450 | |
| | INDIA | 35,250 | |
| | MALDIVES | 4,400 | |
| | NEPAL | 2,950 | |
| | PAKISTAN | 23,500 | |
| | SRI LANKA | 8,800 | |
| | 1.2 Interest Earned (FCBU A/C) | 5,00 | |
| | 1.3 Secretariat Costs from Sri Lanka | 35,000 | |
| | TOTAL INCOME | 119,200 | |
| 2. | ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE | | |
| | 2.1 Salary of Director | | 34,920 |
| | 2.2 Salaries of Other International Officers | | 19,200 |
| | 2.3 Salaries of Local Staff | | 14,325 |
| | 2.4 International Travel | | 20,000 |
| | 2.5 Secretariat Costs | | 43,000 |
| | SUB TOTAL | | 131,445 |
| | Capital Costs | | 17,500 |
| | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | 148,945 |
| 3. | INCOME/EXPENDITURE | | (29,745) |

SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 1999
BASED ON A FULLY OPERATIONAL SECRETARIAT

| | | | INCOME US \$ | EXPENDITURE US \$ |
|-----------|------------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. | ANTICIPATED INCOME | | | |
| | 1.1 | Pledged Country Contributions | | |
| | | BANGLADESH | 7,350 | |
| | | BHUTAN | 1,450 | |
| | | INDIA | 35,250 | |
| | | MALDIVES | 4,400 | |
| | | NEPAL | 2,950 | |
| | | PAKISTAN | 23,500 | |
| | | SRI LANKA | 8,800 | |
| | 1.2 | Interest Earned (FCBU A/C) | 1,000 | |
| | 1.3 | Secretariat Costs from Sri Lanka | 36,665 | |
| | | TOTAL INCOME | 121,365 | |
| 2. | ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE | | | |
| | 2.1 | Salary of Director | | 42,000 |
| | 2.2 | Salaries of Other International Officers | | 24,000 |
| | 2.3 | Salaries of Local Staff | | 23,900 |
| | 2.4 | International Travel | | 20,000 |
| | 2.5 | Secretariat Costs | | 58,000 |
| | | SUB TOTAL | | 167,900 |
| | | Capital Costs | | 17,500 |
| | | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | 185,400 |
| 3. | INCOME/EXPENDITURE | | | (64,035) |