

# **Singapore's National Statement by Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating Minister for National Security, Minister for Home Affairs and Chairman of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change Mr Teo Chee Hean, at the UNFCCC COP-18 High Level Segment**

Mr President,

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your election as the President of this Conference. I thank you for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements at this Conference. We assure you of our support to make this Conference a success.

## **Way forward**

As the UNFCCC charts a way forward at this critical juncture for a new global agreement, it is important to draw on our collective experiences of the last two decades. These experiences provide a solid and sustainable foundation for the future. We believe that it is important for any new agreement to be built on the following three pillars:

First, the Framework Convention. The Framework Convention has provided a well accepted foundation for our negotiations over the last 20 years. The Durban agreement reiterates the importance of the Convention's Principles and Provisions to guide our work in this new chapter. The Convention must therefore continue to serve as the key pillar of any new agreement.

Second, the new agreement must be applicable to all. Climate change is a global challenge that requires a global solution. All Parties have to play their part by making a contribution. In this regard, developed countries have to show leadership in emissions reductions. Developing countries, too, can and must make a contribution to the process. It is encouraging to see that some Parties have submitted mitigation pledges in Doha, and we urge others to also come forward and make their pledges. This will provide the assurance to Parties that all are willing to contribute to the global solution and enable a higher level of ambition to be reached.

Third, for the new agreement to be applicable to all, it has to be acceptable to all. It has to take into account the unique national circumstances and constraints of Parties. This will allow each Party to decide how best it can contribute, based on the context and constraints of each country, and provide a greater impetus for universal participation,

The global agreement is only a means to an end. Ultimately, we need to encourage and incentivize all parties to adopt the right policies early to make the transition to a low emissions development pathway. It is therefore important to provide support to build capacity in developing countries. Singapore will be happy to share experiences and expertise with other developing countries in the field of green development. Under the Singapore Cooperation Programme, we have provided technical assistance and capacity building programmes to officials from many developing countries and small island developing states since 1992, in subjects such as economic development, urban planning and water management. We are committed to continue the sharing of experiences to disseminate and encourage best practices.

## **Singapore as a responsible citizen**

As a responsible global citizen, Singapore is also committed to play its part in the global fight

against climate change. Singapore has made an unconditional pledge to reduce its emissions by 7-11% below business as usual (BAU) by 2020. We have also committed to a 16% below BAU pledge, if there is a legally binding global agreement. We have set out our commitments and plans in the National Climate Change Strategy 2012, which was published in June this year.

Singapore's approach to climate change is an extension of our history of sustainable development in the face of constraints, challenges and limitations. Since our independence in 1965, we recognised the need to balance economic growth and environmental protection. We are a compact city-state on an island smaller than New York City. We were thus acutely aware, from the start, of the need to carefully look after what little land we have, in order to provide a good living environment for our people. We became a Garden City, long before the need to be green became more generally accepted. Today, we continue to strive for a high quality living environment and sustainable growth, for current and future generations.

Our vision for Singapore is a climate-resilient global city that is well-positioned for green growth. While climate change poses a challenge, it also offers tremendous opportunities for new economic growth. The global demand for low-carbon solutions will catalyse demand for new skills and technology. Singapore has placed priority on developing areas such as clean energy and energy efficiency, green buildings, public transport, smart grids, carbon management, as well as waste and water management. Singapore's National Research Foundation has also provided significant funding to establish research centres of excellence in Singapore in partnership with MIT, ETH Zurich, Peking University, and other renowned universities, working on urban mobility, environmental sensing and modelling, and low carbon research, amongst others; and we have recently launched a major research programme in land and liveability. We are happy to work with other countries to see how technology can be applied more widely to achieve green goals.

As Singapore is a city state with limited access to renewable energy, energy efficiency is core to our efforts to reduce emissions in all sectors. To support this, a new Energy Conservation Act will come into effect in April 2013. Beyond having robust policy frameworks, galvanising public support and action will continue to be important to motivate sustainable adjustments to lifestyles or changes to business processes.

## **Conclusion**

Mr President, the global challenge of climate change requires a global response, with the participation of all countries and contributions by all. The multilateral rules-based system under the UNFCCC is fundamental to solving the global climate challenge. We need to protect and strengthen the UNFCCC and take it one step further towards a truly global agreement, so that it remains an important platform for global action against climate change.

Thank you, Mr President.