



INPUT FROM HON GOVENDER: BRICS INTER PARLIAMENTARY DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Hon Chairperson, the topic of our discussion, "***Inter Parliamentary Dialogue on Climate Change and sustainability***" enjoins us to reflect on the question of climate change and the need to mobilize BRICS Parliaments to act together.

Hon Chairperson, Climate change poses a significant threat to sustainability by disrupting ecosystems, impacting food and water security, and exacerbating inequalities. Sustainable development aims to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations. Climate change makes it harder to achieve this balance. Addressing climate change is therefore crucial for achieving sustainable development goals.

Hon Chairperson, the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are intrinsically linked to climate action, as climate change impacts many of the goals. In this regard, climate change can undermine progress on food security, water availability, and human health.

Climate change alters ecosystems by affecting species distribution, interactions, and the timing of biological events, potentially leading to significant changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services. In addition to the above, a warming planet can make it more difficult to grow food, and rising sea levels and changing precipitation patterns can disrupt water resources, impacting food security and livelihoods.

It is worth noting Hon Chairperson, that climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, such as those in developing countries, who may lack the resources to adapt to its impacts. Addressing climate change requires both mitigating its causes (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adapting to its effects (building resilience to climate hazards).

Hon Chairperson, sustainable development offers solutions to climate change by promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency, and circular economy models that reduce emissions and resource consumption. Moreover, policies addressing climate change can also contribute to other sustainability goals, such as promoting sustainable transportation, improving urban planning, and supporting rural development.

Considering its impact, addressing the climate change impact requires BRICS and international cooperation and the vigorous

implementation of agreements such as Paris Agreement. Climate change remains a serious threat to national and global development and shared prosperity. The poor and most vulnerable have become the worst affected due to their inability to adapt to the adverse impacts of the climate phenomenon. Climate change poses particularly difficult challenges for policymakers.

It demands action across all sectors of the economy and across the global society. To this end, Climate change contemporary challenges demand forceful leadership and a strong international response, as its adverse impact stands to harm economies, threaten nations and imperil communities and ecosystems.

Hon Chairperson, climate change is also a dangerous political issue that has the potential to be used as an opportunistic agitator to unseat governments and determine the outcome of elections in democratic States. It has taken a central stage in both domestic and international politics and has become a major agenda item of many nations, regional organizations, multilateral bodies such ours and the United Nations.

As such, action to address climate change requires coordination among multiple governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. The extended timeframe over which climate change unfolds requires capability to plan, implement and sustain a

credible commitment to increasingly ambitious policies over multiple political cycles.

The nature of the severe challenges that are created by Climate Change necessitates a variety of stakeholders like Parliaments to ensure that the implementation of these international commitments and objectives is realised through its oversight mandate and law making.

Hon Chairperson, South Africa's main priorities remain focused on securing an ambitious and progressive finance and adaptation package to support African and other developing countries. In this regard, parliaments in general and BRICS Parliaments in particular, have an important role to play in ensuring oversight over the implementation of the international agreements and commitments relating to Climate Change.

In South Africa, climate change is considered a development issue: it causes poverty, affects food security and has a severe impact on the global economy. Today, climate change has moved from being a scientific to a policy issue, and it is in this context that Members of Parliament, as public representatives, have an important role to play on behalf of the people they represent.

Hon Chairperson, the way in which climate change affects us all depends on where we are located on the global map. In this regard, the hardest hit population group are poor people, such as the inhabitants of developing countries who are predominantly farmers, dependent on rain-fed and basic mechanisms for tilling the land and earning a livelihood. Let us work together as BRICS Member States to reduce the scourge of climate change effects. Without our commitment and cooperation to reduce the impact of climate change, the attainment of the SDGs will remain a pipe dream.