

Statement by Mr. Tesfai Ghebreselassie Sebhatu Minister of Land, Water and Environment- of the State of Eritrea 3rd Voice of the Global South- virtual Session of Environment ministers 17 August 2024



Excellency Mrs. Leena Nandan,

Vice-minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Indian

Esteemed Colleagues,

Environment Ministers of Global South Countries,

First, on behalf of the Government of the State of Eritrea and myself, I would like to express deep appreciation to the government and people of India for hosting the 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit (VOGS), and particularly for organizing this virtual session, where environment ministers of the Global South Countries can exchange our respective governments' perspective on climate change mitigation and the path way for a healthy environment that guarantees sustainable social and economic progress.

Honorable Ministers,

Eritrea's contribution to the global GHG emission is negligible. Yet the country is among the most vulnerable to climate change impacts. In my country, the overall economic, social and ecological impacts of climate change are so clear and grave to require emphasis.

Unpredictable pattern of rainfall with uneven distribution both in time and space, recurrent droughts resulting in dire water scarcity, land degradation, terrestrial and marine habitat destruction and attendant loss of biodiversity and soil fertility, decline of agricultural production, evolution of climate change induced pests and diseases etc. are some manifestations of climate change impacts that we witness in the country.

In an effort to address these challenges, Eritrea has embarked nationwide generational programs that focus on nature-based solutions through ecosystem restoration, that include:

- soil and water conservation,
- forestation and re-forestation,
- establishment of terrestrial and marine protected areas,
- promotion of crop and livestock varieties that can resist drought, diseases and pests,
- advancement of bio-fertilizers application and banning use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides,
- improving capacity in waste management,
- introduction of solar energy applications and efficient energy appliances etc.

To accentuate what is accepted by all, paradigm shift in the way people connect themselves with and perceive nature is critical in the fight against climate change. To our belief there is no issue other than saving our planet Earth that can more unite human beings and make them understand that at the end of the day they are members of one family with the same fate.

Taking this into account, Eritrea is giving special attention to environmental education and public awareness campaign. This will enable our citizens internalize the graveness of climate change impacts and the indisputably fundamental need for living in harmony with nature.

In as much as climate change is global and life threatening that impacts all countries in many ways, we strongly believe the quest for its solution cannot be otherwise but all inclusive. Nonetheless, given the magnitude and source of the

climate crises, measures such as that my country and other non-emitter countries can take, however good and necessary, have very little contribution towards mitigating global climate change.

Unless, for narrow and short-lived national interests one tries to evade tackling the problem in earnest, science has already indicated that drastic GHG emission reduction is the only way out of the ever-worsening global climate crisis.

In this regard, Eritrea aligns itself with the countries that strongly urge the principle of common but differentiated responsibility of all nations be adhered to as stipulated in the UNFCCC and the PA.

The urgency of appropriately ambitious climate action in this decade remains paramount. In such a situation, the developed and major GHG emitter country parties need to commit themselves to realize their net zero emission targets not later than 2030.

Honorable Ministers,

Recovery of lost trust in international climate negotiation and agreements is critical to the success of global partnership to mitigate global climate crisis. Therefore, we demand all parties to the UNFCCC and the PA to fulfill their commitment and promises.

Mobilization of USD 100 billion annually by developed country parties to assist developing countries has yet to be met in full. And access to existing environmental financial facilities need to be made easy to those in need of it.

As the climate crisis is worsening faster than previously anticipated, a robust and ambitious New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on Climate Finance need to be delivered at COP29. This is essential for developing and LDC countries to enhance ambition and confidence in the implementation of their NDCs, NAPs and Long-term strategy to net zero emission. Cooperation in knowledge and technology transfer to the developing and LDC countries also need to be given special attention and commitment. In this case South to South partnership can also play a significant role. We press for it.

Thank you for your attention.

August 21, 2024