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U N I T E D N A T I O N S **N A T I O N S U N I E S**

Opening Remarks by
MR. SHA ZUKANG
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
TO THE DELHI CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE:
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER
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Your Excellency Mr. Manmohan Singh, Your Excellency Mr. Mohammed Nasheed, President of the Maldives, distinguished Ministers, Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to be back in India, a beautiful, diverse country, with an ancient civilization and creative people. Having served in the Chinese Embassy in Delhi, in the 1980s, I am truly impressed to see the great changes taking place today.

Historically, India has contributed little to global warming. Today, India is a rapidly developing economy, yet its per-capita emissions remain low in comparison with developed countries. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is honoured to co-organize this conference on climate change and technology with India, building on last year's conference in China.

The Delhi Conference takes place at a critical juncture in the climate negotiations – just six weeks before COP-15 in Copenhagen. The high level of participation here reflects this meeting's importance. Yet, our purpose here is not to negotiate. This is an opportunity for informal and very frank discussions – to move toward consensus on technology issues where there is still no meeting of minds.

We know that modern technology will be absolutely central to humanity's response to climate change. We also know what the tough issues are:

- How to foster closer technology cooperation between countries, between enterprises and between the public and private sectors?
- How to ensure technologies are widely shared?
- How to build capacity in developing countries to use, adapt and develop climate change technologies?
- How to make technologies – for clean energy, mitigation and adaptation – affordable in all countries?
- How, in the area of intellectual property, to reward innovation while accelerating diffusion?
- And what sort of international institutional mechanism should support technology cooperation, transfer and capacity building?

Innovation in low-emissions technology still takes place largely in the developed countries. Given time, developing countries will, no doubt, make increasing contributions to this technology development.

But climate change demands urgent action and rapid, wide diffusion. The world cannot afford to wait for these technologies to follow the usual path of gradual diffusion, from rich to middle-income to poor countries. Let me be blunt: global climate policy will succeed – or fail – depending on whether it brings low-emissions technologies and technologies for adaptation within the reach of poor countries, and poor communities, without further delay.

Having contributed the least to climate change, developing countries are the most vulnerable to its impacts. Yet, failure to address the challenge would be disastrous for the whole planet.

The full arsenal of climate-friendly technologies should be mobilized for the fight against climate change. International technology cooperation and knowledge sharing can ensure that mature technologies – like those for energy efficiency – are widely adopted.

Other technologies, such as many renewables, are commercially available, but still not accessible to the majority of people. Indeed, access to electricity remains unreliable and expensive for the average citizen in the developing countries, where the demand for energy is growing the fastest. Renewables widen the affordability gap even further.

That is why, in UNDESA's latest *World Economic and Social Survey*, we advocate a big investment push on renewable energy in developing countries. Such a push would accelerate technological learning and cost reductions, so that clean energy becomes affordable to all – sooner rather than later. This will require strong international financial support to developing countries, given the scale of the investments involved and the still high costs of renewables.

Financial support also needs to be scaled up in order for developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable, to be able to acquire and develop technologies for adaptation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The sooner countries are able to shift onto low-emissions paths and to strengthen their resilience to climate change's impacts, the better the prognosis for humanity and the planet. We have a responsibility to find ways to make that happen.

This meeting can send a clear message to Copenhagen that there is a way forward on technology cooperation and technology sharing, one that will enable the international community to tackle both climate change and poverty, to promote development and save the planet, in the apt title of our *World Economic and Social Survey*.

I hope that our discussions will result in some clear answers, which we can send to Copenhagen through our Indian hosts. I wish you all a fruitful and productive meeting.