



Report of the Meeting

of the

Sub-Committee on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia

**21-22 July 2008
Damascus, Syria**

1. The Sub-Committee on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia held its meeting on 21-22 July 2008 in Damascus, the Syrian Arab Republic. APA Delegations from Bahrain, Bangladesh, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan, Palestine, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey participated in this meeting. The list of participants is attached as Annex 1.
2. His Excellency Dr. Mahmoud Al-Abrach, Speaker of the Syrian People's Assembly, delivered his kind opening statement at the beginning of the meeting. Honorable Mr. Subhi Al-Hamadi, Member of the Syrian People's Assembly was elected as the Chairperson; Honorable Mr. Mohammad Al-Kouz, Member of the Jordanian House of Representatives was elected as the Vice-Chairperson and Honorable Mr. Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh was elected as the Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee.
3. The list of documents before the Sub-Committee included:
 - APA/Economic Com/2007/01, dated 20 November 2007, Resolution on Economic and Sustainable Development;
 - SG/Rep/2008/05, dated 6 July 2008, The Report of the Secretary-General on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia.
4. The Preliminary Report of the Secretary-General to the Sub-Committee on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia contained in document SG/Rep/2008/05 had been forwarded to all APA Member Parliaments on 6 July 2008 and has been available on the website of the APA Secretariat ever since.



5. The Sub-Committee welcomed the Report of the Secretary-General, SG/Rep/2008/05, and expressed appreciation for the manner in which it was submitted to the Sub-Committee for its consideration.
6. The Sub-Committee exchanged views on different elements and ideas in the Report of the Secretary-General with a view to pursuing its objectives. The Sub-Committee took note of the suggestions for further steps to be taken as mentioned in the Report of the Secretary-General.
7. Participating delegates further made the following points:
 - a) The hazardous impacts of the U.S. policies and Israeli occupation in West Asia including nuclear activities, dumping chemical wastes and dangerous materials and ammunitions used in the war in Iraq and the War of July 2006 against Lebanon, are the major concern expressed by all of the participating delegates.
 - b) Certain Western governments, particularly the United States, bear the biggest bulk of responsibility for the present catastrophic environmental situation in the world not only by continuous refraining from acceding to the Kyoto Protocol and committing to it but by supporting such anti-environmental actions of Israel who systematically cleanses the Palestinian and Lebanese lands from so many precious olive trees and other plantations which are considered the most valuable assets of the defenseless residents of those lands. Destroying trees by many years of bombing and uprooting has deprived those areas from one of the most effective means of protecting the environment and has also contributed to the global warming in these areas. The same anti-environmental actions have been practiced by foreign forces in Iraq in recent years now and are deplored by all participating delegations.
8. The Sub-Committee expressed appreciation to the Syrian People's Assembly, particularly H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Al-Abrach, the Speaker of the Assembly for his excellent leadership and organization of the meeting and the hospitality offered to all participants.
9. The Sub-Committee recommended the following draft resolution to the first APA Executive Council meeting of 2008, to be forwarded to the APA Plenary for consideration of the Political Committee:



Draft Resolution

on

Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia

We, the Members of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly,

Recalling the Resolution on the Friendship Pact in Asia, APA/Economic Com/2007/01, dated 20 November 2007 and the Annex thereof;

Welcoming the Report of the Secretary-General on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia, contained in document SG/Rep/2008/05, dated 6 July 2008, to the Sub-Committee meeting on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia held in Damascus, the Syrian Arab Republic on 21-22 July 2008;

Taking note of the deliberations of the Sub-Committee on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia;

Being aware of the undeniable importance of promoting development and economic progress for Asian countries;

Expressing concern about rapid environmental degradation in Asia resulting, *inter alia*, from its unsustainable growth patterns;

Recognizing the need to create a balance between the prerogatives for development of the Asian countries and the protection of their environment;

Also recognizing the responsibility of developed countries and international institutions to special needs of Asian countries in their strive towards the protection of environment;

Acknowledging the importance of cooperation among Asian countries to share experiences and best practices in dealing with the environmental degradation in Asia;

Emphasizing the need for achieving the targets defined by the Kyoto Protocol and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) including MDG 7;

1. *Encourage* Member Parliaments to call upon their respective governments to prepare a sustainable development strategy, a strategy on climate change and a national action



plan to achieve yearly energy savings to be adopted by the parliaments.

2. *Urge* Member Parliaments to work closely with their respective governments to achieve MDGs including MDG 7.
3. *Urge further* Member Parliaments to devote more attention in the budget to environmental issues, to strengthen environmental aspects of all legislations and to scrutinize the activities of their respective governments related to environmental issues, climate change and mass tree-planting program.
4. *Emphasize* the need for the access of all Asian countries to advanced technologies to protect their environment and *recognize* the responsibility of developed countries and international institutions in this regard.
5. *Invite* Member Parliaments to encourage their respective governments to work more closely with United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) on different aspects of planting billions of trees throughout Asia.
6. *Decide* to designate 'Global Warming' as the theme for further discussions in the next session of the Sub-Committee and to continue with discussions on other aspects of the work of the Sub-Committee in its subsequent sessions.
7. *Decide also* to discuss an Asian Plan of Action for environmental issues, global warming and planting billions of trees throughout Asia when the discussions referred to in the operative paragraph 6 are exhausted.
8. *Welcome* the initiative of the Secretary General to communicate with UNEP on planting billions of trees throughout Asia and *Request* the Secretary General to report to the next session of the Sub-Committee the results of his communication with UNEP.
9. *Request further* the Secretary General to seek the views of Member Parliaments on the implementation of the present resolution and report thereon to the next session of the Sub-Committee to be held in the Republic of Korea in 2009 as proposed by the Korean Parliament.
10. *Encourage* the North's developed countries to financially help the South's developing nations in their efforts for an environmentally sustainable development.
11. *Emphasize* the need to dispose of the wastewater generated by the factories, power plants and all industrial users in an environmentally safe way.
12. *Strongly recommend* to use the unutilized lands for tree plantation purposes.



13. *Decide* to promote environmental education and public awareness in our countries.
14. *Commit* ourselves to do all in our capacities with respect to efficient use of water resources and observing technical standards including environmental economics.
15. *Stress* the necessity of engaging other stake-holders such as NGOs and the Civil Society in the campaign for protection of environment in our countries.
16. *Request* APA Secretariat to collect data from the Member Countries concerning environmental issues such as higher temperatures, melting of ices, planting trees, food security, environmental degradation, water shortage and pollution, bio-diversity, and environmental technical know-how in order to prepare a database for the reference and use by all APA member countries.
17. *Invite* the resourceful members of APA to provide funds to other less resourceful APA members for implementation of the goals and policies recommended in this resolution.
18. *Request* UNEP to provide technical assistance to APA member countries who are in need of such assistance to enforce environmental policies.
19. *Propose* the adoption of slogans such as “planting one new tree for each new born child.”
20. *Underlines* the necessity of transferring environmentally sound (green) technologies to developing countries at an affordable cost.
21. *Encourage* the use of Compact Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles and alternative sources of energy such as solar, wind, etc.



Annex 1

List of Participants

in the First Meeting of the

Sub-Committee on Environmental Issues, Global Warming, and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia

**21-22 July 2008
Damascus, Syria**

(In alphabetical order)

Parliaments	Delegates	Companions
1. Bahrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Fuad Al-Hajee (Member of Shura Council) - Hon. Khalil Al-Marzooq (Chairman of Legislation & Legal Committee, Council of Representatives) 	- Mr. Yousif Marhoon (Senior Specialist Media & Public Relations, Shura Council)
2. Bangladesh	- Hon. Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui (Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Rapporteur of the meeting)	- Mr. Md. Humayun Kabir (Private Secretary to Hon. Deputy Speaker)
3. Iran	- Hon. Hossein Nejabat (Member of Islamic Consultative Assembly)	- Mr. Ali Reza Naraghipur (Attache, Economic Section, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Damascus)
4. Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Mohammad Al-Kouz (Member of the House of Representatives, and Head of Delegation, and Vice-Chairman of the meeting) - Hon. Mohammad Abualhyeh (Member of the House of Representatives) 	- Mr. Haitham Al-Rahamneh (Public Relations Officer)
5. Kuwait	- Hon. Ali Salem Al-Deqbasi (Member of Kuwait National Assembly)	- Mr. Jamal Abdallah Al-Khamees (Director of Foreign Relations, Kuwait National Assembly)



6. Lebanon	- Hon. Dr. Ali Mokdad (Member of National Assembly)	
7. Pakistan	- Hon. Dr. Safdar Ali Abbasi (Member of Senate) - Hon. Mohammad Abbas Kumaili (Member of Senate)	- Mr. Muhammad Riaz (Superintendent, Senate)
8. Palestine	- Hon. Taysir Qubaa (Deputy Speaker of Palestine National Council and Head of the Delegation) - Hon. Zuhair Sanduka (Member of Palestine National Council)	
9. Russia	- Hon. Valery Yazev (Vice-Chairman of State Duma)	- Ms. Yulia Guskova (Adviser, Secretary of Russian Delegation to APA) - Mrs. Valentina Tribunskaya (Interpreter)
10. Saudi Arabia	- Hon. Mohammed Elsharif (Member of Shura Council)	- Mr. Mohammed Al-Saeed (Adviser)
11. Syria	- Hon. Subhi Al-Hamadi (Member of People's Assembly and Head of Delegation and Chairman of the meeting) - Hon. Muhammed Osama Burhan (Member of People's Assembly) - Hon. Dr. Fatima Fouiti (Member of People's Assembly)	
12. Turkey	- Hon. Abdulkadir Emin Onen (Member of Parliament and Chairman of Turkish APA Group)	- Mr. Ali Bozcaliskan (First Secretary, Turkish Embassy, Damascus)
APA Secretariat	- Hon. Dr. Ali Khorram (Adviser to APA Secretary-General) - Hon. Mohsen Azimi Etemadi (Adviser to APA Secretary General)	

* Please report any error in the above list to the APA Secretariat at:

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