

Sharing clean energy technologies crucial in climate change fight – UN official



22 October 2009 – Ensuring that developing countries can access cleaner energy-producing technologies to meet their development needs without increasing pollution will be crucial in the global fight against climate change, a top United Nations official stressed today.

Addressing a high-level meeting in New Delhi on climate change and technology transfer, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang noted that innovation in low-emissions technology still takes place largely in the developed countries.

“But climate change demands urgent action and rapid, wide diffusion,” he told the gathering, which comes with just over a month left to go before countries meet in Copenhagen to ‘seal the deal’ on a new pact to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

“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,” said Mr. Sha.

“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.”

Technology transfer to developing countries – without which they will be forced to rely on older and less climate-friendly technologies – has been a pivotal issue in the climate negotiations.

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

Therefore, he called for the “full arsenal of climate-friendly technologies” to be mobilized for the fight against climate change. In addition, financial support needs to be scaled up so that

developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable, can acquire and develop technologies for adaptation.

"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," he stated. "We have a responsibility to find ways to make that happen."

Mr. Sha added that the New Delhi 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.

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