

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON INCLUSIVE
DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SOUTH ASIA**
31 March-1 April 2009

Keynote Address at the Inaugural Session
31 March 2009

Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad

Organized by Bangladesh Unnayan Paris had (BUP) under the auspices of
Imagine a New South Asia, Supported by ActionAid, held in Dhaka

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SOUTH ASIA¹

31 March-1 April 2009

Keynote Address at the inaugural session 31 March 2009

Qazi Kholoquzzaman Ahmad²

The theme of the conference is inclusive development and climate justice in South Asia. The two sub-themes, inclusive development and climate justice, are intimately related. Adverse climate change impacts fall disproportionately harshly on the socially excluded, disadvantaged people. Social inclusion can and must be designed and pursued not only from socio-economic points of view but, at the same time, also from environmental point of view, and in an integrated fashion. It is argued that while each nation must address the issues nationally, regional cooperation will be of immense help for a better future of individual countries as well as regionally. Let me deal with the sub-themes in turn before talking about regional cooperation.

Inclusive Development

The Ruling Paradigm

South Asian countries have been implementing neo-liberal free market paradigm. Let me briefly mention some of the key performance indicators of the region's economies over the past decade and a half or so:

- ? Respectable, even high economic growth rates have been achieved in recent years
- ? But socio-economic disparity has been glaring and accentuating
- ? High levels of poverty and hunger are persisting:
 - ✍ PPP\$1 poverty: over one-third of the regional population
 - ✍ PPP\$2 poverty: over three-fourths of the regional population
- ? Women and children belonging to poor families are particularly disadvantaged and many of them suffer from oppression and trafficking.

Social Exclusion

The economically disadvantaged majority also suffers from social disadvantages and political marginalization. All these people may be categorized as socially excluded. Social exclusion may be defined as the "process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially

¹. Organized by Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) under the auspices of Imagine a New South Asia (IN SA), supported by ActionAid, held in Dhaka.

². Chair, INSA South Asia Regional Steering Committee; Chairman, Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP).
Email: <bup@citech-bd.com>

excluded from the society in which they live in". The socially excluded are not a homogenous group — they consist of many different groups, hierarchical as well as horizontal.

Who Creates or Accentuates Social Exclusion?

- ? Actively by the state through its policies enabling the rich and powerful to appropriate most of the benefits of development and by powerful economic and other groups by exploiting the less fortunate, as is the case under the neo-liberal paradigm
- ? Passively by the state by not taking steps to stop unethical and illegal actions by powerful socio-economic-political groups that cause deprivations to groups of people not able to fight back
- ? Traditionally nurtured sense of class/caste distinctions, which is unethical and anti-human rights.
- ? Absence of an effective policy stance to reverse the above mentioned trends, given the political processes not informed and shaped by people's democratic values and practices.

Inclusive Development

The ongoing development in South Asia is not sustainable as the concomitant accentuating disparity is a sure recipe for growing social tensions and disaffection which could lead to social destabilization. Also, the persisting debilitating poverty and deprivations make for a hotbed of terrorism in the sense that the people who are consumed by hopelessness can be and are easily recruited by terrorist groups.

Inclusive development, on the other hand, means that everybody must be equitably included, and nobody excluded. That is, the inclusive social transformation process must ensure everybody's equitable participation in its constituent sub-processes—economic, social, political, environment, and so on.

A realization is emerging in South Asia that the ongoing social reality is unsustainable. For example, there is a lot of talk in India to make the planning and budgeting processes responsive to the demands of inclusive development. In Bangladesh, the election manifesto of the ruling party, the Awami League, calls for a change, change to a new social order. A vision of a society to be realized by 2021 has been outlined as: a society which will be characterized by a economic vibrancy; ensured basic needs of all citizens; participatory democracy; social justice; women's rights and equal opportunities; good governance based on rule of law, transparency, and accountability; guaranteed human rights for all; non-communal and progressive social framework; and a pollution free natural environment.

The lessons emerging from the ongoing meltdown of the global financial systems and the consequent global recession must strengthen the cause of inclusive development. Greed and irresponsibility are inherent in neo-liberal unfettered, unregulated free markets. Human nature is vulnerable, not always but neither infrequently, to opportunities for advancing illegitimate purposes. Such unethical and anti-social behaviour on the part of many chief and other executives of many large financial institutions and industries in USA and Europe, as is now well known, has been the main cause of the present unprecedented financial and economic crisis the world is passing through.

As opposed to this unacceptable neo-liberal paradigm, inclusive development would establish people's perspectives in the management of the affairs of the state and the economy. Market will still play an important role but will be required to operate under effective regulatory systems and will be obliged to fulfill all the legitimate corporate social responsibilities.

How to Move Towards an Inclusive Society?: The INSA Proposal

In this regard, INSA promotes a two-pronged approach. On one hand, it seeks to raise awareness among the people that they have to articulate and voice their legitimate demand for

equitable access to economic, social, and political processes. This is a necessary precondition for them to break out of their debilitating situation of deprivations and injustices and embark on a path of progress as full members of the society, securing their equitable shares of socio-economic progress and legitimate participation in decision making processes.

At the same time, INSA seeks to sensitize the decision making circles at the national and regional levels with concrete proposals for moving on to an inclusive development pathway, based on an analysis of the existing realities, international and regional realities, and voices of the socially excluded in South Asia.

INSA is, in fact, a people-centred research-cum-campaign process³. I emphasize it is a process, not another NGO or development organization. It also relies on networking with other processes and institutions promoting similar objectives. In its campaigns it not only uses the findings from its own research and reflections but also the relevant findings and proposals of its network partners.

INSA proposes a policy framework for the envisioned paradigm shift, involving the following key concepts:

- ? **Freedom**—the goal Freedom of the excluded from poverty, hunger, oppression and all other unfreedoms; it obviously implies human rights, social justice, and rule of law to be ensured for all and guaranteed high moral and ethical standards as well as transparency and accountability.
- ? **Empowerment** (through education, training, and healthcare) — to enable the ‘unfreed’ to undertake steps towards freedom.
- ? **Shared prosperity** (through active and equitable participation of the excluded in economic, social, and political processes of national transformation and regional cooperation, which must be facilitated by appropriate policy and institutional restructuring at appropriate levels)
- ? **Unity in diversity**, which means that diversity be celebrated while establishing unity of purpose among all segments of society (including ethnic, religious and other minorities) in respect of larger social goals.
- ? **People’s democracy**—institutionalization of democracy at all levels of society with appropriately devolved powers and genuine participation of all segments of population.

Climate Justice

South Asia as a region is highly vulnerable to climate change. Countries of this region are visited by various natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, tornadoes, storm surges, saline intrusion, droughts, and river bank erosion. These natural disasters are already occurring more frequently and with more devastating consequences as climate change is intensifying. It is now clear that climate change and the consequent disasters will further worsen in future.

It is also known that climate change impacts fall disproportionately harshly on the poor countries and poor people in those countries. Hence, majority of the socially excluded,

³. Since its inception in 2006, INSA has completed four regional research projects: economic management in South Asia, governance and democracy in South Asia, peace and harmony in South Asia, and environment and climate change in South Asia. It has organized two regional policy forums in Delhi (2007) and Colombo+Kandy (2008) and several other regional consultations. Many national consultations and campaigns at the people’s level through caravan journeys have been conducted in different countries. Conclusions and recommendations arrived at different times have been communicated to governments and SAARC. We intend to intensify INSA activities in future.

disadvantaged people of South Asia are hugely in harm's way due to climate change. That means social exclusion will be more intensified under climate change if appropriate protective steps are not taken in time.

Indeed, climate change is a **global issue**, in so far as climate is indivisible such that the emitted greenhouse gasses (GHGs) circulate all across it regardless of where they are emitted from. But it is also a **local life and livelihood issue**, particularly in relation to its impact. When one considers as to who is mainly responsible for and who suffers most from climate change, it is also a **human rights issue** and a **justice issue**.

Climate Justice has both a global context and a national context. Globally, climate justice demands that today's developed countries compensate the poor developing countries for the sufferings imposed on them as a result of human-induced climate change caused by global warming due to GHGs emitted mostly by them. It may be in order to cite a few statistics to exemplify the situation.

About 80% of the total accumulated GHGs in the atmosphere at the present time have been emitted by the developed countries, mostly since the Industrial Revolution. Also, even today, they are responsible for about 60% of the annual GHG emissions. It may also be noted that per capita GHG emissions is as high as 20 tonnes in the USA, 6 to 12 tonnes in European countries, about 4 tonnes in China, and about 1.1 tonnes in India. It is meagre in Bangladesh at only about 0.24 tonnes per capita/annum.

Given the main burden of responsibility in causing global warming and anthropogenic climate change lying with the developed countries and as their GHG emissions are still increasing, the developed countries have the main responsibility, in terms of justice and equity, to save the global human society and the planet. Earth from disastrous consequences. They must cut back sharply on their GHG emissions by, say, 80% by 2050.

This responsibility of the developed countries has been recognized by the world community in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), enshrined in the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. That is, the developed countries must bear the main responsibility of mitigation, while of course the developing countries should contribute as far as possible to the cause without jeopardizing their prospects of eradicating hunger and improving the standards of living of the disadvantaged segments of their populations to a humanly dignified level. Indeed, GHG emissions from developing countries mostly occur as these countries endeavour to provide basic needs to their growing populations, while high and rising amounts of GHGs emitted by developed countries arise from activities undertaken to contribute to further growth or maintenance of their affluent and highly wasteful life styles.

At the national level, to ensure climate change justice along with social, economic, and political justice in the process of inclusive development, climate change issues must be integrated with socio-economic-political issues of inclusive development to establish an integrated sustainable development pathway. Adaptation to climate change impacts is the operational concept. For justice to be ensued, the adaptation processes must be constructed in such a manner and such adaptive technologies be developed or adopted that are consistent with acceleration of equitably distributed economic growth. This must be the guiding principle to utilize all the resources devoted to addressing climate issues. To enhance resource availability, international finance and technology transfers should in fact be demanded from the developed countries as compensation payments against damages caused and will be caused by the intensifying anthropogenic climate change brought about by those countries.

Regional Cooperation

In its endeavour towards a paradigm shift to inclusive development that will not only ensure economic, social, and political justice but also climate justice, each South Asian country stands to benefit a lot from regional cooperation for a number of compelling reasons.

The South Asian countries have common heritage and face common problems. Studies have shown that each country would benefit much more if issues with cross-country perspectives are addressed together by the countries involved than if national approaches were followed. South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has, since its establishment in 1985, adopted many protocols, conventions, and agreements to address together various common problems including poverty, low intra-regional trade, environmental degradation, terrorism, energy insecurity, and so on recognizing that these issues can be addressed more effectively and each country will benefit more if they are addressed regionally. But little progress has been achieved in reality, strong mistrust among the political and bureaucratic establishments of the regional countries has persisted.

It may be suggested that if the regional countries were at a much higher level of economic cooperation in terms intra-regional trade than the present 5% or so and intra-regional direct investment and joint ventures, the South Asian countries would surely have been able to responded much better in managing the impacts of global financial meltdown and the consequent global recession than is possible now. In that case, they could have drawn on one another's strengths arising from the high level of insulation of their banks and other financial institutions from international financial systems and large regional markets. Also, given cross-country linkages of terrorism, they could address this menace more effectively together.

But, despite many opportunities and even compulsions, the top down approach followed so far has been of little avail in forging meaningful cooperation, let alone any move towards regional integration. However, it has been recognized by the regional governments that people to people contact can be a powerful instrument for promoting regional cooperation in so far as almost all SAARC summits held so far have called for flourishing people to people contact across the regional countries. Indeed, a people-centred approach has the potential to break the logjam of mistrust and non-cooperation.

INSA therefore, seeks to invoke and mobilize people's perspectives, particularly the perspectives of the excluded through research, networking, and campaigns towards building people's solidarity within countries and bridges among peoples of the regional countries for moving on to new individual nations based on inclusive development with climate justice and a new South Asia facilitated by cooperation and integration among those new nations.

Indeed, when the legitimate demand of the excluded for equitable inclusion are articulated, shaped and advocated nationally and regionally, the regional governments of different countries individually as well as all regional governments together through, for example, SAARC may respond purposefully towards actualizing the envisioned paradigm shift. The processes of building both the envisioned new nations and a new South Asia can and will proceed simultaneously.

**INSA REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND
CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SOUTH ASIA**

(31 MARCH-1 APRIL 2009)

SESSION ON CLIMATE JUSTICE

(31 MARCH 2009, AT 2:30 PM)

Speech of Chief Guest

Advocate Mostafizur Rahman MP

Hon'ble Minister
Ministry of Environment and Forest
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Spectra Convention Centre, Dhaka

31 March, 2009

Respected Chairman

**Special guest, Distinguished Participants of the Regional Conference on Inclusive
Development and Climate Justice from Home and abroad.**

Assalamu Alaikum,

It is my Pleasure to be with you at the discussion meeting on Climate Justice in South Asia. I congratulate the organizers Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) and Imagine a New South Asia (INSA) for organizing a regional conference on "Inclusive Development and Climate Justice in South Asia". I thank ActionAid and Oxfam GB for supporting this discussion meeting. I welcome the participants from other regional countries and wish them a fruitful stay in Dhaka.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh is a country of six seasons. But the diversified nature of seasons is changing rapidly. For example, winter is getting shorter, while summer is getting longer. The average temperature is increasing. Also floods, cyclones, storms and storm surges are increasing. It has been established by scientists that all these occurrences are manifestations of climate change. Climate change has now become a threat to environment, our economy, our way of life, life and livelihoods of the poor and disadvantaged people, and perhaps even to the integrity of the planet Earth itself.

Distinguished Delegates and Guests

There is no doubt that climate change is intensifying. It is now well known that this is essentially human-induced. The large and increasing emissions of greenhouse gases particularly by the western world have changed the character of the Earth's atmosphere leading to global warming and climate change.

Warnings have been issued by scientists about the intensifying threat of climate change. And we are observing destructive climatic events. One may legitimately wonder what the world will look like when our young children grow up. It would be irresponsible to ignore them. As decision-makers, we have the duty to take the climate change issues seriously and take initiatives for mitigation and adaptation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We, the people of third world countries are struggling to alleviate poverty and improve the living standard of our poor people to levels of human dignity. Global climate change is an additional serious burden upon us for which we are not at all responsible. Indeed, the climate change impacts are likely to be so immense that every aspect of our economy and human lives will be severely jolted unless effective responses are made in time. We are determined to take whatever steps are necessary to minimize the impacts of climate change in Bangladesh.

Distinguished Guests,

Our government is very much concerned about this issue. The Government of Bangladesh under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already formed a high level committee to review the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008 and another to address the issues of best utilization of trust fund amounting TK 300 crore. At the international level we are negotiating with the Developed Nations for resource and technology transfers to address the climate change threat issue

for which we are not responsible. Justice demands that they extend adequate assistance to us to manage climate change effectively while our economic growth is also accelerated.

To ensure climate justice at the national level we have to involve people in the process of climate change giving due importance to the needs of people at large, in relation economic and social aspects and climate change impacts.

Rapid economic growth is a must for poverty alleviation. Of course, growth will have to be equitably distributed. In this context, Hon'ble Shikh Hasina's government is following the prescriptions outlined in Awami League's election manifesto, the Charter for Change.

Ladies and Gentleman,

It is important that we generate our own analysis and perspectives in South Asia. There is thus an urgent need for collaborative research in the South Asian region and for capacity building. The use of traditional knowledge and increased research into the impacts of climate change are essential. We have to build capacity in all sectors and mainstream adaptation into the development process. Let us work together to address this menace. I look forward to receiving the conclusions and recommendations of the conference, which we will take very seriously in the process of policy making.

I thank you all for your efforts towards securing climate justice for all. I wish the delegates from other SAARC countries all the best and safe return to their home Country after the conference is over.

Finally, I like to mention that it is the month of our Independence. Let me pay homage to our great leader Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman..

Thank you all.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.

Address by Chief Guest at the Concluding Session

(2:30 PM, 1 April, 2009)

I am thankful for the opportunity to be with you at the concluding session of the two-day regional conference on inclusive development and climate justice. The issues you have chosen for discussion deserve top priority in the interest of the people of our region, South Asia. We must strive for sustainable development. For that, the key issues of inclusive development and climate justice must be properly addressed. I congratulate the organizers, especially Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, a nationally and internationally well known think tank, and Imagine A New South Asia. I thank Actionaid for supporting such a laudable effort. I felicitate the participants from other SAARC countries and hope they have had a fruitful stay in Dhaka. I wish them safe return journey to their respective homes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You imagine a New South Asia, which is a peaceful, prosperous, just and democratic. You have initiated a people-centered process to advance the cause of shared South Asian march towards that goal. The election manifesto of Bangladesh Awami League has proposed a charter of change, change to a new social order. We seek to establish a society in Bangladesh by 2021, characterized by a rapid expanding economy with the fulfillment of basic needs, a participatory tolerant democratic system, social justice, women's rights and equal opportunity, rule of law, good governance based on ensured accountability and transparency, human rights to all, non-communal and progressive society and a pollution free environment.

The Bangladesh Government under the able leadership by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already begun to take steps to realize this vision. We are therefore with you in looking and moving forward to our shared goal.

Obviously, each South Asian country has to design and pursue their own people centered development. But there is a lot to learn from one another and many opportunities to work together towards that goal. Moreover, in a process of flourishing cooperation all the South Asian countries will derive more benefits than if they go it alone. This has been shown by many studies and also by SAARC agreeing to cooperate on many fronts for larger mutual benefits. Of course, not a great deal has yet been achieved by the official SAARC process. Your work will surely give a boost to the governments of the regional countries and SAARC to act, and act quickly. EU in particular, but also ASEAN has achieved a great deal through regional cooperation.

In South Asia, about one-third of the region's population lives on less than PPP\$1 per person per day and over 75% on less PPP\$2 per person per day. They are being deprived not only in economic terms, but also in social, legal and political terms and belong to a broad category of people suffering, at widely varying degrees, from human dignity deficits and social exclusion. Landlessness, unemployment, underemployment, employed but earning very low incomes are the common realities in our regional countries. Also, non-fulfillment of legitimate rights of women and the disadvantages suffered by ethnic minorities, untouchables, mental and physically handicapped, people living on vulnerable coastal areas and river banks are more or less common phenomena in the regional countries. We can solve these problems for each of our countries more effectively if we work together.

Natural disasters not only in Bangladesh, in each country of this region hurt the poor severely. Their livelihoods get shattered. Regional cooperation can be a powerful tool to respond to natural disasters by increasing climate capacity in the region and enabling more effective programming and resource mobilization. We are fully aware of this.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We must rise above past mistrust. We must change the mindset of non-cooperation. We must all serve our people and we can do that more effectively if the regional countries work together on issues which are best addressed regionally, for larger benefits of all. Let us build a strong and flourishing regional cooperation which will help ensure our people's peace and prosperity, happiness and dignity and protect them from natural and other disasters and terrorism.

Mission to promote more policy convergence from people's perspectives on key issues, more regional cooperation, joint initiatives at government as well as civil society and strengthening of people to people contact should be pursued with determination towards establishing a progressive democratic modern South Asia. I wish BUP, INSA and other organizations mirrored every success in their efforts to that end.

I look forward to receiving the finalized conclusions and recommendations of this conference. Our Government will give full consideration to them for incorporation into relevant policies and action programmes.

Thank you to all.

Imagine a New South Asia (INSA)

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SOUTH ASIA

Conclusions and Recommendations

1 April 2009

An Integrated Socio-Economic-Climatic Approach

Climate change has come about as a consequence of highly carbon-intensive development. It cannot, therefore, be addressed in isolation. An integrated approach to socio-economic and climate change issues must be forged. Obviously its shape and contents will vary depending on the circumstances and the level of development faced by different countries.

But, the basic framework will be same for certain countries, such as the South Asian countries, facing broadly similar realities in those respects. Hence, South Asian countries will benefit tremendously through cooperation in constructing and implementing an integrated pathway for socio-economic-climatically sustainable development.

Inclusive Development

? Everybody must be equitably included in all social transformation processes such as economic, social, political, and environmental. This implies human rights, social justice, and rule of law to be ensured for all, and high moral and ethical standards as well as

transparency and accountability to be established in all private and public spheres.

- ? Roles of the state and the market must be balanced. Lessons from the unprecedented global financial and economic crisis caused by greed and irresponsibility inherent in neo-liberalism must be taken on board in changing course in terms of appropriate regulatory systems to be adopted and implemented to guide evolution of socially responsible markets.
- ? Promote gender equity in economic, social, political, and cultural spheres.
- ? Reorganize economies from people's perspectives replacing the ongoing neo-liberal paradigm.

A key concept in this process is equitable distribution of growth; and for that to happen, people left behind must be empowered through quality education, training, healthcare services, and access to resources and employment.

Policy restructuring is required to encourage and facilitate investments to those sectors such as agriculture, rural non-farm activities, rural infrastructure, and small enterprises in which people at large can participate as owners or employees.

Continuous human capability and technology upgrading should be pursued as a basic ingredient for accelerated economic and social progress.

- ? At the same time, potential high-tech sectors such as ITC must be vigorously facilitated towards modernizing the economy.
- ? Appropriate safety nets/social security systems should be in place for those who cannot, for one or another compelling reason, participate in the economic process. Obviously, the required social security coverage may be large at the present time, which must be progressively reduced as the people-centred socio-economic transformation moves ahead.

Democratization

- ? Establish people's democracy at all levels of society, institutionalized and with devolved powers as well as financial and administrative autonomy.
- ? Ensure freedom of speech, media freedom and right to information.

South Asia-Across Economic Management

- ? Establish a South Asia Development Bank, particularly to fund people's development and infrastructure projects in different countries.

South Asia Development Fund established in the Colombo SAARC Summit may serve useful purposes, if made operational, should serve a useful purpose. But, this is not enough. That's why a South Asia Development Bank is proposed.

- ? Establish integrated multi-modal connectivity across South Asia. Connect all capital cities by daily direct flights. Expand and

upgrade the capacities of roads and rail infrastructure to sustain heavier traffic loads emanating from regional integration of traffic movements.

Education and Training

- ? Take steps to ensure universal, quality and unified, secular primary education by 2015 or earlier, focusing particularly on girls and various excluded groups.
- ? Raise national educational expenditures in each country to at least 6.0 percent of GDP as stipulated in Dakar Framework of Action, from the present 2.2-3.4 percent.
- ? Put major emphasis on vocational training side by side with primary and secondary education, particularly for the excluded. Design primary and secondary education as being both terminal and continuing.
- ? Establish a South Asia Education Fund to support cooperation mechanisms in education such as students and teachers exchanges programmes, scholarships, educational tours for people interested in education.
- ? Include messages on peace, justice, respect for cultural, ethnic and religious diversities and dignity of women in the text books of primary and secondary schools in all South Asian countries.

Food and Agriculture

- ? Operationalize Food Bank, already established by SAARC, with a initial stock of two million tons of grains to ensure food security of the people affected by major crop failures or large scale crop losses

due to natural disasters. Contributions and benefits of each country should be on the basis of ability and needs.

- ? Strengthen and upgrade the existing South Asian Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC) as a regional centre for strengthened exchange of innovations in agricultural technologies across the countries as well as for collaborative research and various aspects of agricultural development.
- ? Introduce land and agricultural reforms to provide small-holding farmers including women access to and control over land which will improve agricultural productivity and promote sustainable agriculture.

Natural Resource Management and Climate Change/Justice

- ? Work in unison to demand that developed countries reduce, with reference to 1990, their carbon emissions by 40% by 2025 and by 80% by 2050, and transfer adequate financial resources and clean technologies to developing countries including South Asia.
- ? Establish a South Asian Climate Change Fund to support activities in the member countries in response to intensifying climate change.
- ? Pool together expertise and resources to undertake extensive research to formulate and implement best possible adaptation activities in different countries.
- ? Fully operationalize the SAARC comprehensive regional framework on disaster management 2006-15.
- ? Maximize efforts to reduce disaster risks at community level with people's participation.

- ? Agree and implement Basin-Wide Management of common rivers for win-win results for all the co-riparians in respect of irrigation, hydroelectricity, water supply and flood management.
- ? Establish Regional Energy Grid for effective cooperation towards ensuring energy security in all countries.

Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad
Chair
South Asia Regional Steering Committee, INSA