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Key Speeches during CCICED 2009 AGM

Zhou Shengxian Calling for Harmony between Energy and Environment under the Guidance of Ecological Civilization

MEP Minister and Executive Vice Chairperson of CCICED, Mr. Zhou Shengxian made a speech at the 2009 AGM on the theme of harmonizing the relationship between energy and environment under the guidance of ecological civilization. He called on all countries to take a long view to deal with problems on environment, development and energy from a much broader perspective, to enhance communications and cooperation and foster production and consumption modes compatible with ecological civilization, and to create a beautiful planet and a better future for human kind.

Zhou said, energy is the important source of economic and social development. Energy issue, to a large extent, is a development issue. While creating huge material wealth, the development and utilization of energy also brings about a series of severe environmental problems including air pollution, ecological damage and climate change, which imposes direct threat to sustainable economic and social development. The relations among energy, environment and development in China are particularly special and complex. With the fast progress in building a well-off (*Xiaokang*) society in an all round way, China is facing more serious challenge in environmental protection due to the development and utilization of energy. The economic growth at the expense of high cost of resources and the environment require a second thought, giving-up and innovation of the traditional industrial culture, which will create new development mode and facilitate the development of a new culture. Therefore, ecological civilization emerges as times require and becomes the option for effectively addressing the issue of resources, environment and economic growth.



The 17th National Congress of Communist Party of China clearly points out that China will develop ecological civilization and identifies it as a strategic task. At the Fourth Plenary Session of the 17th National Congress of Communist Party, CPC Secretary General Hu Jintao once again raised the concept of developing ecological civilization to the same strategic height as of economic, political, cultural and social development and took it as a component of the overall arrangement of the cause of developing socialism with Chinese characteristics. The emergence of this important strategy is both the progress of cultural form and improvement of social system; as well as the enhancement of values and transformation of life styles; and the direction of new path of environmental protection in China and beneficial attempt in the process of human civilization. As a higher form of human civilization and a component of the overall arrangement of the socialist cause with Chinese characteristics, the development of ecological civilization mainly involve such contents as advanced ecological ethic concept, developed ecological economy, improved ecological system, basic ecological security and good ecological environment. With the understanding of law of nature, respecting and protecting nature as the pre-condition, ecological civilization focuses on the harmony between man and nature, you and me, individual and society. Based on the carrying capacity of resources and the environment, ecological civilization aims at establishing sustainable industrial structure, production mode and consumption pattern and improving the capacity in sustainable development. It emphasizes the initiative and self-discipline of people, interdependence and interaction between man and nature. The development of ecological civilization originates from the internal requirement of scientific development and the rational absorption of the excellence of the traditional Chinese culture. It is the scientific upgrading of industrial civilization as well as the requirement of historic certainty and current urgency in striving for sustainable development, said Zhou.

Zhou noted that ecological civilization is valued for innovation, focused on development and achieved with continuous efforts. Based on the current situation and focusing on the long term, an overall plan should be made with unremitting efforts. Starting from the most urgent and demanding aspects, linkages and tasks for developing ecological civilization, China will practically address the most prominent problem, and facilitate actively the progress in the development of ecological civilization.

At present, from the environmental protection point of view, the main tasks for the development of ecological civilization are the following:

- a. strive for the development of production and consumption modes that meet the requirement for developing ecological civilization. We will take initiatives to choose the production mode and life style with low consumption and pollution but high efficiency, and control economic development activities within the carrying capacity of the environment to boost the

- development of green economy, low carbon economy and circular economy;
- b. accelerate the development of the relevant system and mechanism for sustainable development. We will improve and carry out ecological compensation system for utilization of resources and target responsibility system for environmental protection. We will deepen pricing reform to accelerate the development of pricing mechanism for production elements and resources that reflects market supply-demand relations, resource scarcity and environmental damage cost; facilitate the reforms on the prices of resources and environmental charge and continuously improve green environment economic policies. We will improve our capacity in planning, coordinating, optimizing and promoting sustainable development and develop a scientific decision making mechanism and management mechanism;
 - c. carry out the emission reduction of major pollutants with unswerving effort. We must take “maintaining operation” as the central task of current emission reduction activities and make great efforts to ensure normal operation of pollution control facilities of enterprises. Focusing on thermal power industry, we will vigorously reduce the amount of air pollutants emitted. We will also take pulp and paper industry as the key industry and reduce the amount of water pollutants discharged. In addition, we will enhance the target responsibility system for emission reduction and strictly implement every penalty and accountability measure;
 - d. strive to solve prominent environmental problems threatening public health. We should focus on the priority of controlling heavy metal pollution, ensuring drinking water safety and improving classified management of drinking water protection zones and emergency supervision and management system for drinking water sources. We will take comprehensive measures to actively prevent other environmental problems affecting public health;
 - e. rehabilitate rivers, lakes and other important ecosystems to revive their vitality. We need to take care of the rivers and lakes by identifying the development mode and scale based on their environmental and ecological carrying capacity. Law of nature should be respected to make full use of the ecosystem’s self-rehabilitating capacity so as to gradually change ecological degradation. We will make engineering, technical and ecological steps to enhance the protection and development of ecological environment and boost the benign circle of the ecosystem. Legal, economic, technical and necessary administrative measures will be fully used to solve long-standing problems of water environment. While rehabilitating rivers and lakes, we will embark on policies and measures to restore such major ecosystems as wetlands and grasslands;
 - f. promote ecological civilization across the society. We will widely promote ecological

civilization so that the concept will be rooted in each organization, school and family and finally be turned into voluntary actions of every citizen for conservation of resources and energy and protection of ecological environment.

Zhou indicated that development of ecological civilization is the soul and orientation of environmental protection cause in the new era whereas environmental protection serves as the forefront and essential instrument for development of ecological civilization. Advancing ecological civilization and promoting harmony between man and nature is an important task for environmental protection as entrusted by social-economic development. We will hold highly the great banner of ecological civilization, strive to be the proponent, leader and practitioner of ecological civilization, with an overview to solve key environmental issues at a higher level and in a broader way, and actively exploring a new path with Chinese characteristics. To follow the guidance of ecological civilization and undertake active explorations on the new path of environmental protection, we must make in-depth study on new challenges posed by the financial crisis on environmental protection and fully implement the new requirement on environmental work as a result of the strategy to boost domestic consumption. The following eight aspects will be strengthened: firstly, we will seize the opportunity to foster new sources of economic growth and emerging industry and boost the development of green economy and green industry; secondly, we should withstand the short term pressure caused by the development of heavy chemical industry and make unremitting effort to reduce major pollutants; thirdly, we will give full play to the role of environmental impact assessment in macro regulation to facilitate the implementation of plans for adjustment and revitalization of the top ten industries; fourthly, speeding up urbanization to solve urban environmental problems; fifthly, promoting social and economic sustainable development in rural areas and strengthening rural environmental protection in a integrated manner; sixthly, encouraging innovations in economic and social policies and constantly improving environmental economic policies; seventhly, seizing the rare opportunity brought about by independent innovation of technology to develop efficient and applicable green technologies; and eighthly, advocating and guiding green consumption, and promoting new consumption pattern.

Zhou said, ecological civilization is the direction of human civilization, but its development is largely constrained by environmental problems. No country is immune to or able to address by itself the acute situation interwoven with energy, environment and development issues. All countries should take a long view to deal with environmental problems from a much broader perspective, enhance communications and promote cooperation on technical research and development that caters for the need of energy conservation, environmental protection and low-carbon energy sources, hence fostering production and consumption modes compatible with ecological civilization. We are ready to join hands with the

international community to build our home and shape up a brilliant future.

China Takes Six Measures to Promote Energy Conservation and Emission Reduction and Fight Climate Change

Vice Chairman of National Development and Reform Commission, Mr. Xie Zhenhua revealed at the 2009 AGM of CCICED, that in the first three years of the 11th Five-Year Plan Period, China's energy consumption per unit of GDP decreased by 10.1% accumulatively and discharges of SO₂ and COD dropped by 8.95% and 6.61% respectively. In the first half of 2009, energy consumption per unit of GDP was further down 3.35% with SO₂ emissions and COD discharge cut by 5.4% and 2.46% respectively. Active progress has been made in energy conservation and emission reduction and climate change adaptation in the 11th Five-Year Plan period.



Xie elaborated on the six measures China adopted to conserve energy, reduce emissions and address climate change. First, phasing out outdated production capacity. From 2006 to 2008, China eliminated obsolete production capacity in several energy-intensive sectors including 60.59 million tons of capacity in iron smelting, 43.47 million tons in steel-making, 140 million tons in cement and 64.45 million tons in coking. By the first half of 2009, 54.07GW small coal-fired units had been shut down, meeting the target of eliminating 50GW small coal-fired units in the 11th Five-Year Plan period by one and a half years before deadline. Second, optimizing energy mix. By the end of 2008, China's renewable energy utilization had reached 250 million tons of coal equivalent. The capacity of hydropower installed and nuclear power plants under construction, total heating area from solar water heaters and production capacity of solar energy have been all topped in the world. Third, promoting technological improvement. China have accelerated R & D in energy-saving technologies and solved a batch of technical difficulties that are keys to energy saving solutions. In addition, China implemented 10 key projects on energy saving and a series of projects on environmental management, accelerated the establishment of technical service system for energy conservation and practiced contract-based energy management in order to cultivate a service market for energy conservation and environmental protection. Fourth, increasing forest carbon tank. Active efforts have been made to carry out ecological policies, ranging from protecting natural forest, converting farmland to forest and grassland, to developing and managing meadows and nature reserves. This has further enhanced the capacity of forestry as sink of greenhouse gases. The past five years saw rapid growth in stock volume of forest by nearly 100 million m³ per year and China's forest coverage

increased to 20% from 14% in early 1990s. The area of preserved artificial plantation ranks the first in the world. Fifth, strengthening basic management. Statistic, monitoring and evaluation systems for energy conservation and emission reduction are to be established and improved; stringent accountability system is to be put in place. The standard for minimum energy efficiency is introduced for energy-consuming products and the scope of mandatory labeling of energy efficiency is enlarged. Earnest effort has been made to ensure energy conservation management in key energy-intensive sectors such as power, iron and steel, construction and transportation industries as well as public organizations. On-line monitoring is conducted on key pollution sources and regional pollution control continue to progress in key river basins to address prominent environmental issues. China is promoting circular economy by applying experiences under different models. Sixth, improving policies and mechanisms. A special fund is established to support key energy saving projects, energy-efficient products and contractual management of energy in the form of reward instead of subsidy. Enterprises engaged in energy conservation, circular economy and comprehensive use of resources are favored through tax reduction and exemption. Projects dedicated to solving prominent environmental issues are rewarded according to the policy of reward-based pollution control. The research of the mechanism of ecological compensation to support areas with arduous task of ecological protection is also under way.