

**Statement of Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State (Independent Charge)
Environment and Forests in Lok Sabha on 9 March, 2010**

Madam Speaker,

I rise to make a suo moto statement on some of the issues relating to the Copenhagen Accord in the light of recent developments.

I had last made a statement on the subject on Thursday, December 3, 2009. Following this, the 15th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC took place at Copenhagen, Denmark. On return from Copenhagen, I made a statement in the Rajya Sabha on December 22, 2009 when I briefed the Hon'ble members about the Conference outcomes. I had also highlighted the role played by the BASIC Group of countries – Brazil, South Africa, India and China – in the negotiations relating to the Copenhagen Accord. The Accord itself was negotiated by 29 countries and was taken note of by the CoP on December 19, 2009.

On 23-24 January, 2010, the Environment Ministers of the BASIC Group of countries met in New Delhi to review the Copenhagen Conference and subsequent developments. The Ministers agreed to communicate, for information of the UNFCCC Secretariat, the voluntary mitigation actions of its member countries. India did so on January 30th 2010 and communicated that India will endeavour to reduce the emissions intensity of GDP by 20-25% by 2020 in comparison to the 2005 level. While doing so, we have clarified that the proposed domestic actions are voluntary in nature and will not have a legally binding character. Further, these actions will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the relevant national legislations and policies as well as the principles and relevant provisions of the UNFCCC.

On February 3rd, 2010, India received a letter from the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC asking whether India wishes to be listed in the Chapeau of the Copenhagen Accord. Listing in Chapeau of the Accord implies that we participated in the negotiations on Copenhagen Accord and that we stand by the Accord. After careful consideration, India has agreed to such a listing. From the BASIC Group, Brazil and South Africa have already communicated their association. Simultaneously, the two countries have elaborated the circumstances under which they have associated themselves with the Accord. China has expressed

support to Accord in their communication addressed to UN Secretary General. Many other countries from G77 & China Group have also associated themselves with the Accord.

Madam Speaker,

I am making the statement to inform the House that India has communicated its decision to the UNFCCC Secretariat with three conditions. First, the Accord is a political document and is not legally binding. It is not a template for outcomes. Second, the Copenhagen Accord is not a separate, third track of negotiations outside the UNFCCC. Third, the purpose of the Copenhagen Accord is to bring about a consensus in the existing and on-going, two-track multilateral negotiations process under the UNFCCC. The Accord could have value if the areas of convergence reflected in the Accord are used to help the Parties reach agreed outcomes under the UN multilateral negotiations in the two tracks. We believe that our decision to be listed reflects the role India played in giving shape to the Copenhagen Accord. This will strengthen our negotiating position on climate change.

Madam Speaker, my sincere endeavour has been to keep this House fully informed at every stage about India's stance on climate change negotiations. This reflects the Government's commitment to transparency and accountability.