



## FOURTH SOUTH ASIAN CONFERENCE ON SANITATION

*“Sanitation enhances quality of life”*

4<sup>TH</sup> – 7<sup>TH</sup> April 2011

Colombo, Sri Lanka

### THE COLOMBO DECLARATION

**W**e, the Heads of Delegation from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> April, 2011, which was attended by Ministers, senior civil servants, grass-roots activists and community members, professionals from sector institutions, academia, civil society, NGOs and development partners, the private sector and schoolchildren:

- 1) *Acknowledge* that the sanitation and hygiene situation in South Asia remains at a crisis point; the numbers of people who practice open defecation or who rely on unimproved sanitation remain unacceptably high; since the last SACOSAN meeting 750,000 children have died in the region from diarrhoea which is strongly linked to poor sanitation;
- 2) *Recognise* the potential of sanitation to empower communities and to be a powerful entry-point for development;
- 3) *Affirm* the value of the SACOSAN process in maintaining political momentum to tackle this crisis and in support of the global Five-Year Drive for Sustainable Sanitation and *reconfirm* the principles of good sanitation and hygiene set out in the declarations made at Dhaka (October 2003), Islamabad (September 2006) and New Delhi (November 2008); and
- 4) *Renew* our joint commitment to investing in the people of South Asia through policies and programmes that deliver sustainable sanitation and hygiene to all.

Further to this renewal of our commitment we unanimously agree and commit:

- (i) In light of the recent UN resolution recognising the **right to sanitation**, to work progressively to realise this in programmes and projects and eventually in legislation.
- (ii) To develop **time-bound plans and to allocate and mobilise resources** for delivering on all previous SACOSAN commitments.
- (iii) To design and deliver **context-specific equitable and inclusive sanitation and hygiene programmes** including better identification of the poorest and most marginalised groups in

rural and urban areas, including transparent targeting of financing to programmes for those who need them most, and taking into account the challenge of protecting the environment and responding to emergencies and climate change.

(iv) To raise the profile of **WASH in schools** with the objective of ensuring that every new and existing school at every educational level has functioning, child-friendly toilets, separate for girls and boys, with facilities for menstrual hygiene management.

(v) To establish **one national body** with responsibility for coordinating sanitation and hygiene, involving all stakeholders including, but not limited to, those responsible for finance, health, public health, environment, water, education, gender and local government at national, sub-national and local levels.

(vi) To establish **specific public sector budget allocations** for sanitation and hygiene programs.

(vii) To **progressively increase** allocations to sanitation and hygiene over time.

(viii) To recognise **the importance of people's own contribution** to sanitation and to ensure that policies and programmes empower communities to invest in and control their own sanitation solutions while protecting the poorest.

(ix) To develop harmonised **monitoring mechanisms** with roles and responsibilities clearly defined, using agreed common indicators which measure and report on processes and outcomes at every level including households and communities, and which allow for disaggregated reporting of outcomes for marginalised and vulnerable groups.

(x) To include in monitoring mechanisms **specific indicators for high priority measures** such as WASH in schools, handwashing and menstrual hygiene.

(xi) To adopt **participation, inclusion and social accountability mechanisms** from planning through to implementation in all sanitation and hygiene programmes at the community level, particularly for the most marginalised areas and vulnerable groups.

(xii) To **build and strengthen capacity** for sanitation and hygiene implementation, including investing in higher education facilities, development of curricula, research and development, and knowledge exchange and partnership development.

(xiii) Continue to ensure the **effectiveness of the SACOSAN process** by committing to report specifically against these and all other SACOSAN commitments when we meet again in Nepal in two years' time, **inviting participation from ministries of finance, health, education and other relevant ministries** in all future meetings.

(xiv) To support the **monitoring and implementation of the Delhi Roadmap** prepared at SACOSAN III through a country-led process of self reporting and the holding of an *annual meeting* of the Inter-country Working Group formed at SACOSAN I which would review progress.

We further call on

*Development banks, external support agencies and the private sector* to increase their support to our efforts, to provide financial and technical assistance for sanitation and hygiene promotion, and to improve aid co-ordination for sanitation and hygiene in South Asia.

*SAARC* to include sanitation and hygiene in its activities and to make a link with SACOSAN.

*The United Nations* to consider the reality of the sector in South Asia **when formulating a new generation of Development Targets post-2015** and in considering **modifications to the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme**, to take into account the need to monitor community-wide outcomes and the high number of shared and community toilets in parts of South Asia.

We express our profound appreciation to the Government and people of Sri Lanka for their excellent hosting of this event and for their generosity and hospitality.

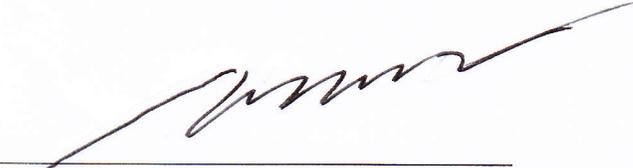
Colombo, Sri Lanka, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2011

Signatories



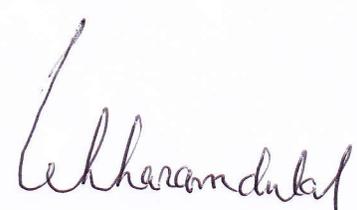
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Hon'ble Jarullah Mansoori,  
Minister for Rural Rehabilitation and  
Development,  
Government of the Islamic Republic of  
Afghanistan



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Syed Mahboob Hasan,  
Additional Secretary, Ministry of Local  
Government Rural Development and  
Cooperatives,  
Government of the People's Republic of  
Bangladesh



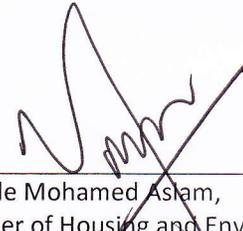
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Mr. Ichharam Dulal,  
Specialist, Ministry of Works and Human  
Settlement,  
Royal Government of Bhutan



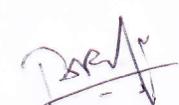
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Hon'ble Shri. Vilasrao Deshmukh,  
Minister for Rural Development and  
Panchayat Raj Institutions,  
Government of the Republic of India



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Hon'ble Mohamed Aslam,  
Minister of Housing and Environment,  
Government of the Republic of Maldives



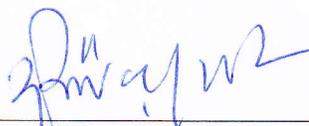
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Hon'ble Top Bahadur Rayamajhi,  
Minister for Physical Planning and Work,  
Government of Nepal



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Hon'ble Engr. Shaukat Ullah,  
Minister for States and Frontier Regions,  
Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



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Hon'ble Dinesh Gunawardena,  
Minister for Water Supply and Drainage,  
Government of the Democratic Socialist  
Republic of Sri Lanka