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**Peter Hayes warns, 'don't repeat mistakes committed by developed countries'
by Ifham Nizam**

British High Commissioner in Sri Lanka Dr. Peter Hayes requested the developing nations not commit the same mistake that the developed nations did 100 years ago by ignoring the impact of environment. They should learn a from the bitter bitter lessons the world has experienced.

Dr. Hayes was the guest of honour at the 18th APFEJ World Congress of Environmental Journalists which commenced Monday in Colombo. Addressing nearly 100 journalists representing many countries across the world for the three-day event, the High Commissioner said that they are in the process of finding out different ways for development.

Speaking on the climate change issue, he said, that the United Kingdom is taking a lead role by appointing committees, committing money and resources to help the whole world.

Minister Patali Champika Ranawaka said nearly seven million people in Sri Lanka had been affected severely in the dry zone due to unexpected changes of monsoon, Chief Guest Environment and Natural Resources.

The minister said while developing nations addressing the issue of climate change, they also have to demand substantial emission reduction targets from the developed countries considering their historical responsibility for the present crisis.

He said, "There should be equity and common, but differentiated, responsibility if we are to keep to the two centigrade threshold. We have to be mindful about the limited carbon space available for us, developing countries, to improve our economies.

"At the Copenhagen negotiation, we have to voice our deep concerns regarding any effort made to dilute the agreed targets set for the developed countries by the Kyoto Protocol and also the commitments of UNFCCC."

Ranawaka said that he was happy to be at the beginning of the world congress on 'Educate to End Climate Poverty', at a critical juncture where the global community has to develop a common position during the forthcoming climate change debates in Copenhagen.

He said according to IPCC, it is necessary to keep the temperature increase below a two centigrade threshold in the 21st century.

He added to achieve this goal; Sri Lanka suggests reducing worldwide carbon emissions by around 85 per cent by 2050, with a peak around 2020. Annex 1 countries would have to target an emission peak between 2012 and 2015, with 49 per cent cuts by 2020 and at least 85 per cent cuts by 2050.

The figure 49 was calculated based on the historical responsibility of annex 1 countries for their past emissions as a result of which the present crisis has arisen, to which all countries, without exception are exposed and made to suffer.

He also said that IPCC has warned that under business as usual scenario, the world faces diminished food security, especially in developing countries. Crop yield could fail by as much as 30 per cent by 2050 in central and south Asia. As many as 1.2 billion Asians could be faced with severe water shortages, from reduced rainfall and as a result of melting glaciers.

Developped countries should reduce their domestic GHG emission by at least 49 per cent below 1990 levels in the commitment period from 2013-2017.

That means their total emission reductions will be determined by applying the principle of historical responsibility or carbon debt and addressing the needs of developing countries. The figure 49 per cent was calculated considering the historical emission, he added.

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