

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY AMBASSADOR RAVINATHA  
ARYASINHA, CHAIRMAN OF THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES  
OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN IN GENEVA**

**At the**

**G-15 Workshop on Best Practices in Renewable Energies, Dakar, 5-7  
November 2012.**

Distinguished Participants, honourable guests from the Government of Senegal, esteemed colleagues from G-15 Missions in Dakar and faculty members of the University of Dakar. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the first Workshop on Renewable Energies in Senegal organized by the Group of Fifteen.

You may be aware that the G-15 is a Summit Level Group of Developing Countries headquartered in Geneva. The Group presently has 17 member countries, including Senegal, from Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean regions of the world. Established in 1989 the G-15 has organized 14 Summits in which our Presidents and Prime Ministers have met in a demonstration of solidarity to discuss a wide range of global economic, social and political issues, particularly those affecting the welfare of the people inhabiting the developing world. As a founding member of the Group, Senegal was the gracious host of the Third G-15 Summit held in Dakar in 1992.

An important endeavour of the Group has been to implement South-South cooperation projects in member countries which could bring direct benefits to the people. To this end, more than a dozen G-15 technical cooperation projects have been implemented by the Group in the past. Senegal itself has been part of two such projects, namely, the Solar Energy Applications Project of village electrification and the Entrepreneur and Technical Development Centre (CEDT) project. In view of the past success of G-15 projects in Senegal, I have no doubt that this Workshop on Renewable Energies will also achieve its objective of enhancing the skills, knowledge and technical capabilities of all the participants.

The subject of renewable energy has, in recent times, moved out of the shadows onto the centre stage of international attention, due to the growing realization of the finite limits of economic growth based on conventional energy sources as well as the adverse impact of fossil fuel based industrialization on climate change. As a net energy importer, Senegal has already begun to

enhance energy security by diversifying towards renewable energy sources like bio-fuels. I hope that this Workshop will be a small contribution of the G-15 to Senegal's efforts in this regard by bringing new ideas and best practices from around the world on hydropower, biofuels, energy efficiency, solar energy, project preparation and implementation and funding for renewable energy projects etc. to you the participants, many among whom, I understand, are already experienced practitioners in the renewable energy sector of Senegal.

Before I conclude, let me express my sincere thanks to the organizers of this Workshop, the delegates of the G-15 Working Group on Sectoral Cooperation chaired by Mexico who worked tirelessly in Geneva in the preparations leading up to the Workshop; the experts from Sri Lanka, Brazil, Mexico and India who will present their national Best Practices in renewable energies; international organizations like the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) who will present global/regional perspectives on renewable energy projects; and to the Government of Senegal, CERER and the University of Dakar for their invaluable contributions. A special word of appreciation to UNIDO which, apart from extending the services of their experts for the training sessions, has also provided funding for the participants; and to Prof. Issakha Youm, who has very kindly taken time out of his busy schedule to act as the Coordinator and Moderator of the Workshop.

I thank you for your attention and wish you three days of interesting, productive and fruitful interactions!

- *Ravinatha Aryasinha,*

*Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Offices in Geneva, & Personal Representative of the President of Sri Lanka to the G-15.*

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