

Welcome address by Bharti Patel CEO – Svaraj

Clean Technology and effective pollution treatment A Multi- stakeholder dialogue

Svaraj with APPCB and BDMA

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In welcoming you all to today's seminar, **Clean Technology and effective pollution treatment - A Multi- stakeholder dialogue** let me say first of all thank the Bulk Drug Manufacturing Association, FABCI, corporate leaders and Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board to give **Svaraj** this opportunity to work with you on this very important issue concerning life and livelihood.

Let me also say how pleased I am to see so many people from the private, public and voluntary sectors here today, and to thank Mr. Tiwari and his team at the Pollution control board who have the task of negotiating between the need for business to flourish and the right for communities to live in safe environment.

I welcome our special guests here today - from the Swedish Environment Research Agency and from Gothenburg University and eminent speakers who have agreed to work with us on understanding the need for effective and efficient clean technology that can be adopted by industries and public sector to ensure a much greener production and safer environment.

In **Svaraj** we believe social, environment and development responsibility starts from the view that each of us has responsibilities we owe to each other, which when executed will result in the well being of the country.

The Indian constitution is clear on this

Article 51 (a) (g) entitled fundamental duties - imposes responsibility on every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including forest, rivers, lakes tanks wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures

In the judgment in *M C ,Mehta v. Union of India (1997)* , relying partly on Article 21- Right to life , there are dicta that life, public health and ecology have priority over unemployment and loss of revenue

Despite this public participation and decision-making to safeguard the environment have been highly contentious issues in modern India as communities see prioritisation of development over conservation.

In today's theme - **Clean technology for Growth and Sustainability** we look forward to hearing from eminent speakers of their experience and draw on latest technology available to ensure not just social, but economic as well as environmental responsibility to development of business in India as we all come to the modern view that corporate responsibility goes beyond the success of its core business. Business excellence now should include corporate responsibility not as an add on, a side show, but at the heart of what you do where companies can make a difference in environment, employment and community life, as well as in success of their own business and how working together we can do more.

What has been referred to as the smart solution for business today.

a recognition that in the modern world, the good economy, the good society and the good environment go together.

This can happen through investing in local communities; its environment and its own plant for a greener production. And can be achieved fairly in an environment of adequate regulatory framework and its enforcement

The Indian constitution is among the few in the world that contains provision for environment protection, being explicitly stated in the 76th amendment stipulating the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment.

The importance of regulations here cannot be underemphasized -

Where you don't have adequate regulations or weakly enforced regulations

- in a free and competitive market, what you get is the good employer is undercut by the bad the bad employer by the worse.
- And what you have is not business regeneration but business degeneration -
- a downward spiral where competition is based on who can undercut whom - from good to bad to worse practices.

The result of which is a loose - loose situation - where everyone suffers - industries close down, workers loose their jobs. The case file gets closed or stuck in Supreme Court and no improvement is made until next case.

And the story repeats itself.

I am sure you are all aware of this cycle. For this we all pay a heavy price in some form or another.

There is no doubt one of the roles of Svaraj as a watchdog on environment and development, along with our community based partners, is to monitor and highlight bad and illegal practices as a way of illustrating all our concerns over degenerating local environment and its impact on communities who are dependent on the local resources for their life and livelihood.

But in this practice of ours we would like to be seen as **critical friend** rather than a destructive bully.

And we would like us all to work jointly leading to recommendations to government for effective and efficient solutions owned and supported by all stakeholder groups.

Regulations should not be seen as a stick to beat with but a necessary tool to ensure fairness in a competitive market and to stop a bad industry practice from taking an unfair advantage by competing on cost cutting rather than on quality and wider responsibility.

In 2000 the minister of environment and Forest drew up plans to convert 7 major cities including Hyderabad and Bangalore into Eco -cities - clean pollution free surrounding and conservation of natural resources for a high quality of living.

The aim is to create economically vibrant, socially equitable and environmentally supportive cities

At end of 2006 we may have some vibrancy in the economy but what we also have is dirty water, polluted air and degraded local land. Where vulnerable communities are forced to live on margins of this land

Are strong economy and healthy environment incompatible goals?

I am sure none of us here believe that. But how do we ensure that this belief is scaled up. And what responsibility each one of us need to take to ensure this happens.

For Svaraj this first conference should be seen as one of many in the future for a positive global flow of technology, ideas and information together with growing international understanding and co-operation with the goal of protecting the environment and rebuilding local, national and global economies

Here the emphasis is not on competition but co-operation for the best. Cooperation

- that mobilises the knowledge and the power of science and innovation in new technologies;
- that uses market mechanisms as well as social and cultural mechanisms to give incentives to change in the way businesses operate;
- that promotes greater personal and social and environmental responsibility in our every day lives;

And all this can be supported by sustained public and private investment in environmental change.

There is a good business case for development of clean technology. I understand from my reading that the global the environmental market is estimated to be worth almost \$700 billion by 2010 - a sector as big as the successful aerospace or pharmaceuticals sectors of today. Industries and companies in India too have the opportunity to compete for these markets. To build partnership that brings together our engineering firms, and scientists; Ngo's and government to look at the development of clean technology and market, social and cultural solutions for the Indian environment and Indian economy

So let me conclude as we start this joint initiative today, by saying I am optimistic about our future. Because we in Svaraj believe that each of us - individuals, businesses, and government and the NGO- are ready to take more responsibility together to help ensure India's future prosperity and success not just in its economy, but in its social programmes, environment sustainability and its culture. Your very presence here today gives me another reason to be optimistic about our future in improving our environment

Once again I welcome you all here today and look forward to working more closely with you all on the protection of our natural resources on which our very lives are dependent upon.

Thanking you,

Bharti Patel
CEO