

Welcome Address of Mr. R.V. Shahi, Secretary of Power, Ministry of Power, India

Plenary Session Meeting of Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum Delhi, India 3 April 2006

Honorable Union Minister of Power, Chairperson of the Policy Group Mr. Jeffrey Jarrett, Chairpersons of the Technical Group, Vice Chairs, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, and representatives from the press and media:

It is my privilege to welcome all of you here this morning. I extend a very warm welcome on my personal behalf and on behalf of the Ministry of Power and Government of India.

We in India are very happy to receive the delegations from more than twenty countries on the occasion of the meetings of the Policy Group and the Technical Group of the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum.

It is a matter of happiness for all of us that Mr. Sushil Kumar Shinde, Union Minister of Power, India, has spared his valuable time to be with us and speak to us on the energy issues in general and the prospects of carbon sequestration in particular. We are looking forward to his address, as it will be a great inspiration for all of us.

I extend a special welcome to Mr. Jeffrey D. Jarrett, the Chairperson of the Policy Group, who in fact is joining this meeting for the first time as a Chairperson.

Sixteen countries of the world joined together in June 2003 to sign the Charter. I had a rare privilege of being part of this historic initiative. We spent several hours to mold and structure the document which emerged as the CSLF Charter. It marked the global recognition of the fact that coal was going to continue to be a major fuel for commercial energy.

Prior to that, coal was being seen as a fuel to be phased out. The world community had started placing greater reliance on other sources like natural gas and renewables. No doubt, renewables are going to be very important in the future, but the limited availability of natural gas and destabilizing volatility in its prices has made us all realize once again the importance of coal.

Concerted efforts are needed, and gratifyingly, they are being made to make coal-based electricity generation more and more efficient and environmentally friendly. I'm sure that more intensified efforts will be made in the future, and this is a part of the process to

see that clean coal technologies of several types not only come to the pilot and the commercial stage but are adapted world over.

The popularity of the CSLF is increasing. More and more countries are recognizing the relevance and importance of this initiative. Subsequent to signing of the Charter, six more countries have joined the CSLF.

In India, we are taking research projects in the area of coal gasification as well as various components of carbon sequestration. We look for what will be a meaningful and fruitful association with the world community in CSLF through collaborative research and development.

Obviously CSLF needs to devise further ways and means to make this collaboration more meaningful. We have to associate all the member countries in this endeavour. I am hopeful that the joint efforts of policy makers, scientists, and researchers will soon make carbon capture and storage a technologically sound and commercially viable option.

Once again, I welcome all of you in India, and I wish your stay would not only be comfortable and satisfying, but also meaningful and memorable.