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At the outset, on behalf of Government of India, I must thank the chair and members of the Policy Group for accepting India's invitation to hold the next meeting of the Policy Group and Technical Group in India. India is extremely happy at this gesture and will be glad to host these meetings.

As you may be aware, India is in the process of a massive electricity capacity addition programme to enhance electricity consumption. Even today the per capita power consumption is slightly above 600 KWhr per year. This must increase rapidly.

We are close to finalizing an Integrated Energy Policy which will present a perspective up to 2030. In the next 20 years, *i.e.*, by the year 2025 India targets to expand the installed capacity to over 500,000 MW from the present level of about 120,000 MW. Thus, over 380,000 MW will be added in the next 20 years. Of this, about 50 percent will be based on coal as the main fuel and the balance will be gas, hydroelectric, nuclear, biomass, biogas, wind, and solar. Hydroelectric is being given a major push as it is renewable.

It is because of our heavy dependence on coal for now, as well as the future, that initiatives such Clean Coal Technologies, Methane-to-Market, Hydrogen Economy and the CSLF assume great and direct relevance to India. It was therefore considered timely and appropriate by us to participate, as a founder member of this great historic initiative.

As I said, India needs a massive addition of new power capacity. It is important for us to provide access to electricity to all our people. But equally important — perhaps more important — is to provide power at affordable rates. We are doing everything possible to see that the cost of power generation and transmission is kept to the minimum. It is in this context that unless new technologies are developed at reasonable levels of cost, their applicability in our situation would be an issue of concern. Power cost is an extremely relevant issue for us.

In India we have been working on a couple of projects utilizing IGCC technology. Even this technology in spite of efforts made globally over last 20 years, has not come to a level of cost which can be considered reasonable for economies like ours.

For CSLF, India has embarked upon a systematic program which involves participation of various stakeholders via research organizations, academic institutions, industry, NGOs and others. All institutions and organizations as well as individuals and various resources are being integrated for best possible involvement. We already have had two major workshops in recent months. Several projects were discussed for the CSLF. Finally two projects were selected. These have been discussed in detail by the Technical Group of the CSLF. One has been finally cleared by the Policy Group and I am given to understand that the second will be discussed further for the next round. I am sure that this project will also receive CSLF's acceptance.

We have already created a CSLF website to disseminate information. While looking forward to a very meaningful meeting in India in April 2006, let me reiterate that India has committed itself for this great endeavor that we are pursuing.`