

## Media Communiqué

### **Roundtable in Male' highlights implications of climate change for regional and national security, ahead of high level talks at CoP 17 in Durban.**

Stories of the citizens from the disappearing islands of the Maldives, flood-affected communities in the Sundarbans of Bangladesh and the drought affected communities in the water scarce hills of Nepal, all in their own ways struggling to cope with the impacts of climate change, are increasingly permeating mainstream consciousness within those countries whose carbon intensive development over the past 100 years has been contributing to these situations. At the same time, international donors from these developed countries are creating new aid funds in an attempt to help the vulnerable cope with the impacts of climate change we are already feeling.

With the next round of high level global climate change talks starting in Durban this week, the high profile issues for agreement are about reducing carbon emissions and – more importantly for the affected communities – how much money the developed countries, who have the main responsibility for global warming, will put on the negotiating table to help people in poorer countries cope with the consequences. But these are not the only important issues.

One issue that is barely acknowledged is the heightened risk of political instability and conflict related to climate change. Factors linking climate change to an increased potential for instability and conflict include water scarcity, accelerated land degradation, increased food insecurity, and indeed the management of the climate funds themselves. The meeting of the South Asian Network on Security and Climate Change (SANSaC) in Male' on the 1st December brought together experts from the climate change and security community to initiate a much needed regional dialogue on these issues.

The roundtable was organised in collaboration with the President's Office of the Government of the Maldives and International Alert (an international peacebuilding organisation). The event was supported by the British High Commission in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The dialogue was inaugurated by the Vice President of the Maldives, Dr. Mohamed Waheed, who will lead the Maldivian delegation to CoP 17 in Durban. SANSaC members from the Bangladesh Institute for Peace and Security Studies, the National Centre for Competence in Research in Nepal, the University of Karachi in Pakistan, the Observer Research Foundation in India and International Alert also spoke at the event. Mr. Ahmed Shafeeq Moosa, the President's Envoy for Science and Technology, outlined the Maldivian Climate Change policy and advocacy outreach. Significantly, the event also marked the establishment of the SANSaC Secretariat in Male', with the full support of the Maldivian Government.

At the conclusion of the event SANSaC members issued a statement outlining key issues for advocacy during the high level talks at CoP 17 in Durban.

#### **Note to Editors:**

1. SANSaC Male' Statement is attached.
2. The SANSaC network was formed in March 2010 with the main objective of ensuring that climate change interventions minimise and pro-actively address the potentials for conflict and insecurity in high-risk climate change contexts.
3. Four photographs from the event are attached below.



SANSaC members briefing the Maldivian Vice President before the meeting



The delegates from Pakistan, Nepal, India and Bangladesh with the Dr Waheed, the Maldivian Vice President, Mr Ahmed Shafeeq Moosa, President's Envoy for Science & Technology and International Alert.



Session chaired by Mr Ahmed Shafeeq Moosa



The roundtable in session