

Remarks at the 1st Meeting of the 3rd Phase of CCICED

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Mr. Chairman, distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen:

Peace and development is the theme of our times. As mentioned in the International Nature Protection Program, desertification, ozonosphere leak, flooding, biological species extinction, famine and diseases are seriously threatening the existence of human beings. Hence, upon the entering into the new century, people have shown more concerns on the environment protection and sustainable development, especially on the earth-our only homeland. The theme of this conference, Environment, Development and Government, responding to the Sustainable Development Summit, has expressed the hopes of human beings to live in harmony with nature, and promote the relationship between environment and development. I believe, this conference, will undoubtedly draw the attention and support of the Chinese people and the peoples of the world. Invited by the secretariat, I'm honored to address here the main progress in Guangxi through implementation of the China's western development strategy and Guangxi's sustainable development strategy to all guests present. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the secretariat, and express my heartfelt congratulations to the opening of the conference.

I. Survey on Natural Resources

Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is located in the south of China, backing on the southwest of China, facing to the southeast of Asia, bordering on Vietnam and neighboring with HK and Macao, the only minority nationality region bordering with foreign countries and having coastal lines among the 12 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities under the Western Development Region. It is the most convenient gateway to sea for the southwest of China. The total land area of Guangxi is 236,000 square km, accounting for 2.5% of the country's total. By the end of 2001, Guangxi has a population of 47.9 million, among which the Zhuang nationality constitutes 33%. Under its jurisdiction, there are 13 prefecture-level cities, 1 prefecture, and 109 counties. Guangxi situates in the subtropical area, with the Tropic of Cancer going through its center. So it has a mild climate, with plenty of sunshine and rainfall. It is rich in natural recourses, especially in the following 5 categories.

The first is forestry, animal and plant resources. Guangxi is one of the key forest areas in southern China. Its forest areas amount to 8.17 million hectares, with a forest coverage rate of 41% and a deposit of 2770 million cubic meters of wood. There are more than 8000 kinds of known plants, ranking the third in the country. The rare plants include about 30 kinds, such as golden flower tea trees, cathay fur, redbud, etc.,

among them the red trees is one of the rare plant species growing on the beach area in southern Guangxi. Some 729 wild vertebrate land animals have been found, among which there are 59 kinds under the state protection such as white-headed monkey and giant salamander, etc.

The second is tourist resources. The karst sceneries are abundant in Guangxi. Up till now, over 400 cultural and historical sites and scenic spots have been developed, with characteristics of green mountains, clear waters, cultural relics and historical sites, subtropical coast and a strong flavor of ethnic groups, and beautiful border scenery. The scenery in Guilin is famous all over the world.

The third is mineral resources. Among the 160 minerals available in the world, 89 kinds have been verified in Guangxi, among which 67 kinds have been developed, and deposits of 53 types rank top 10 in the country. Guangxi is one of the 10 key non-ferrous metal production areas in China.

The fourth is abundant hydropower resources. There is a 16.09 - million - KW installed capacity capable to be developed in Guangxi, ranking the sixth in the country, among which more than 3.6 million KW have been developed, accounting for 25.4% of the total. The Hongshui River is the richest in hydropower, with 13.03 million KW to be developed, on which we plan to build 10 stair power stations. The Longtan Hydropower station, the second largest station in the country and one of the landmark projects of the western development, is now under construction.

The fifth is marine resources. Guangxi has an area of 1005 square km of beach with soft sand, 1438 square km of shallow sea areas with a depth less than 5 meters. It boasts more than 500 kinds of sea fish, abundant petroleum and gas resources, it is also the production base of the famous south pearl.

II. Implementation of the Western Development Strategy

Guangxi is one of China's border and ethnical groups inhabiting region, within the scope of the western development region. It provides a golden opportunity for Guangxi's further development. We will follow the important thoughts of three represents, earnestly carry out the strategies of the western development.

First, we'll fully advance the readjustment of the economic structure, carry out the strategy of reinforcing the primary industry, optimizing the secondary industry and developing the tertiary industry on a large scale. In agriculture, readjust the structure of planting and breeding, develop high yield and good quality crops, increase the peasants' income and county and township's financial revenue. As for the industry, we will focus on technology renovation of the traditional industry, cultivate superior and potential industries, and highly develop non - ferrous metal refining, forestry product processing, and Chinese herbal medicine, electronic information industries. On the tertiary industry, We will develop tourism, communications and transportation,

business and trade service, at the same time, develop private economy and enhance its position in economic structure.

Secondly, focus on the infrastructure construction. Over the last two years, we have continued our efforts on the improvement of infrastructure facilities. To further improve the leading gateway to sea for southwest China, emphasis was given on constructing the artery highways to sea and border, promote the transport capacity of railways and the construction of harbors. By the end of last year, Guangxi has already built up 5587 km high - level roads, among which 850 km are expressway. 53 counties have been accessed to the second - level roads. There are 2715 km mileage of railways in Guangxi, and 5 airports including Nanning, Guilin, Liuzhou, Wuzhou, Beihai airports, 3 seaports including Fangchenggang, Beihai and Qinzhou ports and 4 large river ports. A three - dimensioned transportation network (by land, water and air) and a convenient telecommunication network have taken shape. Continue the building of coastal dykes, flood - relieving projects of the key cities and counties and main river sections in Guangxi, with a few years' efforts, the flood - relieving capacity of Guangxi has been improved tremendously. As for the construction of key projects, the Longtan Hydropower Station, one of 10 landmark projects of the western development, Baise Hydropower Conservancy Project, and the Second Phase Project of Oxidized Aluminum of Pinguo Aluminum Plant and other key projects. are all under construction.

Thirdly, accelerate the science & technical education development. Various qualified personnel were trained or introduced from outside to foster western development since science & technical education is the foundation while qualified personnel is the pledge. Cored with production creation, we promoted extension of the advanced technology and accelerated the integration of technology and economy. Hence, good effects were achieved. We always emphasize the education as priority. The investment of 2.6 billion RMB was injected into the educational facility improvement and the higher learning scale expansion in the last two years. A large number of qualified personnel were trained or introduced from outside. In 2001 the enrolled number of higher learning institutes or colleges students reached 151, 600 and that of Master Degree and Doctor Degree reached 3,057. Guangxi University became one of the key universities under the "211 Project".

Fourthly, poverty alleviation and living standard improvement. Guangxi has a large poverty - stricken area. Thus, providing those poor people enough food and clothing has always been an important goal. The poverty alleviation is one of the key works for western development. Over 470,000 irrigation works, water pools and water tanks have been built in the poverty stricken areas and the drinking difficulty of 36.72 million persons was solved. 63,000km village roads for automobile and 25,000km transformed electrical wire were built. Roads construction has been completed among counties and villages. Electricity, TV and radio broadcasting accessed to every residential area. Over 300,000 households were removed from huts to tile - houses.

The education and medical treatment in poor areas were also improved greatly. As a result, most of people are able to live up with enough food and clothing instead of poverty.

Fifthly, concentrating on border construction. Guangxi has long been at the war frontier, badly hampered the economic development. There are 2.42 million people within 18,000 square km of ethnic residential area in 8 counties and cities bordered with Vietnam still under poverty. It is not only an intense wish of the local residents but also needs of national defense reinforce. Therefore, the priority of initial phase for implementation of western development strategy is focused on the infrastructure construction of these border areas. Since August 2000, we have invested 2 billion RMB for 18,472 projects, fundamentally improved the living conditions of local residents.

Over the last two years, Guangxi has made a good start by implementation of the China's western development strategy. Some vital progress on economic structure readjustment was accomplished. Primary industries and characterized economy developed rapidly. There are 139.1 billion RMB of fixed assets investment accomplished accumulatively and newly-start key projects reached 46. Border construction has scored important achievements with extending science and technology usage. The poverty alleviation project of "Eight - Seven" (which means from 1993 to 2000, within 7 years to solve the poverty problem of 80 million residents in the whole country) has been fulfilled one year earlier. In 2001, Guangxi GDP reached 223.1 billion RMB, gross fiscal revenue reached 26.3 billion RMB and fixed assets investment reached 73.1 billion RMB. In the first half of 2002, our GDP increased by 11.8%, gross fiscal revenue increased by 13.4% and fixed assets investment increased by 16%. In the past two years, although we were facing a lot of difficulties and natural disasters occurred frequently, the regional economy remained a rapid growth rate with quality and efficiency improved.

III. Reinforcement of the Environmental Protection for Sustainable Development

Environmental protection is a great undertaking contributes to the contemporary times and brings benefits for future generations. We aim at building a beautiful green garden. Environment, resources protection and economic development are closely linked to avoid pollution or destruction. As the economy developed, the environmental pollution and ecological disturbance have also been brought under control. The environmental quality in some cities have been improved.

1. Strengthen the leadership on environmental protection. We realized that environmental protection is an important function of government. While we are implementing the western development strategy, the governments in all levels played the leading role on environmental protection. Firstly, place the environmental protection and construction on top agenda to ensure responsibility, policies and organization respectively. Secondly, establish target responsibility system on

environmental protection. The leaders must take the responsibility on this regard, Every year the provincial government signed agreements of liability on environmental protection with the municipal governments. The work of environmental protection reflects the local achievements partly. The other departments are required to cooperate closely. Thirdly, raise money in multi - channel to increase the investment on environmental protection. The provincial government invested about RMB11.4 billion to the environmental treatment of the whole region, accounting 1.2% of GDP. The increase of investment results in great improvement of environment quality. Fourthly, point is to enhance promotion and upgrade of the public's awareness of environmental protection. In recent two years, we have invited the public and news media to participate in the supervision and achieved a good result by a series of activities such as exposure of illegal behavior like environmental pollution and the eco-environment.

2. Pay close attention to urban environmental protection. We gave priority to controlling total pollutant discharge amount, urban environmental infrastructure construction and energy structure adjustment, focusing on the problems such as sewage and garbage treatment and air pollution etc. By doing this, Nanning, Guilin and Beihai, three National Environmental Protection key cities, met the required quality both in water and air; Guilin city ranks the top in the State's Quantitative Inspection of the Comprehensive Environmental Treatment in four consecutive years; Nanning City was awarded "the Award of China Residential Environment", the other cities also scored a significant improvement in environmental quality. What we have done mainly in the recent year are as follows:

(1) TO effectively control the total pollutant discharge amount. Firstly, we decided to eliminate the out - of - date productive techniques and equipments, give time limit to close the heavily polluted enterprises. The amounts of pollutants in all industrial enterprises were highly required to be controlled within the discharge standard and total index. Those failed must stop production for readjustment. Secondly, all new projects and technological reformed projects should be conformed with the Environmental Impact Assessment, sticking to the regulation issued by the State Council as to that the environmental protection treatment facilities in construction projects should be designed, started working and operated with the body project at the same time, which is called "Three - Simultaneity". Thirdly, to carry out cleanly production, push the ISO14000 Verification and Environmental Label products. Fourthly, the small - scale enterprises that waste resources and pollute the environment must be shut down. Fifthly, it is a task for the government officials in all levels to preserve their local land and prevent the eliminated enterprises from moving towards the west development region.

(2) Urban infrastructure construction enhanced by western development and domestic demand expansion. In recent two years, the whole region spent almost US \$200 million of foreign capital on urban environmental infrastructure construction. Firstly, Guilin city invested RMB600 million in the first phase of Environmental

Comprehensive Treatment in the project of "two rivers and four lakes", which are Li River, Taohua River, and Rong Lake, Shan Lake, Gui Lake and Mulong Lake. The project has completed 7.8 km canals that leading the water into the lake, embedded the cutting pollution pipes along the lakes and accomplished the earthwork of millions of cubic meters, which connected Li River and Taohua River to the water system of inland lake and enlarged the water surface of inland lake. The project add more sceneries to this beautiful city, making it clearer in water, green in hills and blue in the sky. Secondly, in Nanning city, an investment of RMB 800 million in comprehensive treatment of Chaoyang Brook and South Lake took preliminary effect. Thirdly, the construction of urban sewage treatment plants has been increased. At present, seven cities such as Nanning, Guilin and Beihai etc. in our region have constructed or are constructing urban sewage treatment plants. The annual domestic sewage discharge amount is 87, 43 million tons, excluding 144 thousand tons of chemi - oxygen and 1. 2 thousand tons of ammonia - nitrogen. Fourthly, the construction of urban garbage treatment plants is encouraged. By the end of 2001, there are 26 urban garbage treatment plants that have been built and put into operation, among which 17 plants apply to innocuous treatment with 1.61 million tons of annual total pollutant discharge amount and 1.41 million tons of innocuous treatment. Fifthly, urban acid rain treatment has been enforced. In 2001, altogether RMB 1 billion has been put into the projects of industrial waste gas treatment in the whole region, and 180 waste gas treatment projects have been completed, increasing waste gas discharge capacity of 6.25 million cubic meters per hour. At the same time, high sulfur content coal and raw coal burning are forbidden, and sulfur dioxide discharge amount should be effectively controlled. In the whole region, acid rain frequency dropped from 58% during the period of the Ninth Five Year Plan to 41.1%, and the acid rain area is gradually decreased by year especially Liu Zhou city, which achieves remarkable effect in terms of acid rain pollution treatment.

(3) Urban afforestation. In recent years, the governments in all levels give the priorities on urban garden landscaping as improvement of investment environment. We focus on overall landscaping, deploying the nationwide tree - planting activities, conducting the landscaping on the urban surrounding barren hills and slopes, roadsides, river – banks, city squares and residential areas. The conspicuous result has been achieved. The urban per capita forestland reached 7.47 square meters. The provincial forest and forestland coverage rates reached 31 .73% and 26.78% respectively. Nanning, the capital city was awarded the title of National Garden City.

3. Rural protection and construction. During the implementation of western development strategy, we compiled (Guangxi Ecological Environmental Protection and Construction Scheme), setting the eco - environmental task and aim. The "Green Project" we carry out involves of closing off mountain for forest conservation, converting farmland to forest land. building shelterbelt of Guangxi area in Pear River and the middle and upper reaches of Yangze, sandification treatment in rocky mountains, small river treatment, coastal and marine eco – environmental treatment,

construction of the key ecological counties etc, which cause a good effect. Since the recent years, we have finished the afforestation of 443 thousand hectares, closing off mountains of 209 thousand hectares for forest conservation and improve the soil erosion of 226 thousand hectares. There are 1.34 million marsh gas ponds have been built and gas usage reaches 15% households of farmers. The completed natural reserves number 58 with an area of 1.7 million hectares. The provincial forest coverage rate reaches 41.8%. A group of ecological model counties like Gongcheng County have been established. In the meanwhile, we have also enhanced the contamination prevention and control on the rural farming and animal husbandry, progressively develop the green food and organic foods, ensure the pollution - free farm and sideline products.

(4) TO advance the comprehensive environmental improvement of the key areas and drainage valleys. We have been focused on improvement of the environmental problems caused strong public concerns and achieved some positive results. In the last two years, efforts were focused on the comprehensive improvement of Diao River, Wuming River and Nanliu River, the water quality of these river valleys were substantially improved. Nowadays, there are four rivers (Zuo River, You River, Yong River and Yu River) under comprehensive improvement for solving the water contamination. We also pay attention to the protection of the offshore ocean waters. The water of Beibu gulf has been maintained as the most purified one among the offshore areas of the country. We have completed the ecological recovery of the 21 key mining areas. A provincial radioactive waste storage has been built and a radioactive contamination control administration has been established so as to strengthen the control of radioactive contamination and hazard wastes.

With long - term endeavors, we have scored some great achievements on the environmental protection the laid a solid foundation for the economic and social sustainable development. Nevertheless, we must be aware of the harsh situation we are still facing. It would take us long - term unremitting efforts to build a good ecological environment and fulfill an ecological virtuous cycle. We must continuously devote more time to this aspect.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Guangxi is an attractive tourism area that has the evergreen mountains and everlasting rivers, and full of ethnic cultures. We have a high quality of environment suitable for vacation and sightseeing. Please find time to visit Guangxi. The Zhuang people of Guangxi are hospitable and would welcome our guests in a special ethnic manner. To conclude my speech, I would like to quote some words of a former Italian Prime Minister said during his visit to Guilin city of our region. He said: the most regretted thing of my life was that I had not been to Guangxi until the age of 73 and must tell my fellow Italians not to make the same mistake. I wish you would not make the same mistake like the Italian Prime Minister.

At last, I wish the great success of the conference.
Thank you all !

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