



Indian Council of World Affairs
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Press Release

Tenth Sapru House Lecture

by

H.E. Ambassador John W. Ashe

President of the 68th Session United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

on

‘Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals’

(21 March 2014)

H.E. Ambassador John W. Ashe, President of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), delivered the **Tenth Sapru House Lecture** on *Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals* at Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), New Delhi on 21 March 2014. Ambassador Shamma Jain, Joint Secretary, ICWA, gave her opening remarks.



Ms. Shamma Jain, Joint Secretary, ICWA, delivering Welcome Remarks.

The lecture was chaired by Ambassador C. Dasgupta, Member of the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change, and Distinguished Fellow at the Energy and Research Institute (TERI). Ambassador Ashe's lecture was followed by an animated discussion by practitioners and experts, drawn from areas such as strategic affairs, policy, foreign relations, media, and the civil society.

In his lecture, Ambassador Ashe described United Nations Millennium Declaration as a historic global anti-poverty movement. He noted that there is uneven progress both among and within countries, with less than 700 days to go for the MDGs. Mentioning the achievements, he informed that the number of people living in poverty had halved, over two

billion people had gained access to improved sources of drinking water, there was decline in the proportion of slum dwellers in the cities and metropolises of the developing world, and incidences of HIV, malaria and tuberculosis had fallen. Nevertheless, he also informed that the sanitation goal was the most formidable one. Despite improvements, goals in maternal health and child survival rates have also not been met. There is now less aid money available. Pervasive inequalities, including gender inequality, and new and emerging environmental challenges remain sources of deep concerns. He shared some sobering figures indicating that more than 1.3 billion people live in extreme poverty, 783 million live without clean water, 1.4 billion people are without access to electricity, and 2.5 billion people lack access to decent sanitation and one billion practice open defecation.



H.E. Ambassador John W. Ashe, President of the 68th Session of the UNGA, delivering the Tenth Sapru House Lecture.

Focussing on a new agenda for the post-2015 era, Ambassador Ashe spoke about the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. He underscored that the new agenda would be marked by distinct features such as a single framework with universally



Audience at the Lecture.

applicable goals, common but differentiated responsibilities, balanced integration of the three pillars (economic, social and environmental) of sustainable development, a bottom-up approach, and inclusion of all stakeholders both in the design, as well as implementation stage.

Ambassador Ashe stated that he had dedicated the 68th session of the General Assembly to helping member states “Set the Stage” by organising three high-level events on contributions of women, the young and civil society; contributions of South-South, North-South and triangular South-South + North cooperation and information and communication technologies for development; human rights and the rule of law, and focusing on three thematic debates on water, sanitation and sustainable energy; role of partnerships and their contributions; and ensuring peaceful and stable societies. He ended his lecture by quoting Rabindranath Tagore, “I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.”