

## **Eighteenth Sustainable Development Conference: Opening Plenary**

### **Securing Peace and Prosperity for Sustainable Development in South Asia**

Keeping SAARC's collective conscience of "promoting peace, stability, amity and progress in the region ..., particularly respect for the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, national independence..." in mind, a mutual respect for each other's solidarity echoes through the efforts made over the years to achieve sustainable peace in the region. It is hoped that the forthcoming SAARC Summit 2016 will witness once more regional commitment to the cause that "... economic, social and technical cooperation among the countries of South Asia would contribute significantly to national and collective self-reliance"<sup>1</sup>

The SAARC Summit would be focusing on various agendas such as the potential of new agreements based on recent political developments between silent neighbours, along with deliberating on giving member status to current observer state.

In view of the above, this plenary session would focus on understanding regional integration and the attempt of SAARC countries at various forums recently to establish new corridors to achieve sustainable development in the region and beyond. The session would also highlight the global political complementarities across borders, while pushing for a progressive approach of expanding the narrative from the bottlenecks of the peace and development process to wealth of possibilities that South Asia holds within itself and for the entire world.

---

<sup>1</sup> SAARC-SEC 1985, 'Charter of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation – 8 December 1985', South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation -SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, Nepal, < <http://saarc-sdmc.nic.in/pdf/charter.pdf>> accessed 13 May 2015, p. 1.