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STATEMENT BY

**THE LEADER OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION
TO THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF
THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

BERLIN

30 MARCH 1995

Madam President,

Congratulations upon your election as President of the First Conference of the Parties of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Congratulations are also due to the other distinguished members of the Bureau.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on behalf of South Africa on this auspicious occasion. There are many who need to be thanked and congratulated for the hard work and progress made in the negotiations that have already taken place. Allow me a special word of thanks to our host country, Germany, and to the city of Berlin. This city, for decades, was divided. South Africa was also deeply divided, but due to positive processes which have taken place, my delegation is in a special position to appreciate and share the joy, contentment and relief which go with such unification.

Madam President,

I should like to take this opportunity to again emphasize South Africa's commitment to the goals of the Convention. We also recognise the need for a dynamic response policy to the phenomenon of climate change. Our country requires that such policy or response strategy must be pragmatic, implementable, affordable and must relate to the need for sustainable economic and social development.

At the outset, South Africa requires competent national monitoring systems for both climate data as well as for anthropogenic gaseous emissions, the so-called greenhouse gases (ghg's). Although a national monitoring system and data-base exists within the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, there is no national monitoring or collecting centre for ghg sources and sinks.

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In this regard, foreign funding would enable my country to establish such a system and data base to the benefit of the region as a whole.

South Africa's commitment towards measuring its emission trends and climate change should be seen in the context of its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Therefore we need to identify the common goals within the RDP and the FCCC. For although we have a relatively strong technical infrastructure, we must extend these benefits to the less developed section of our society. Examples where these aspirations may be achieved can be found in improved housing projects and the expansion of energy availability to all our communities. At present, 80% of South Africa's energy is provided through coal fuelled power-stations, which contribute a comparatively high per capita emission of CO₂. Under the present political thrust for economic expansion and upliftment for the less privileged, energy requirements will increase. In the short term meaningful conversion away from coal to alternate energy sources is impractical.

Any techniques that can be applied to fulfil the dual purpose of helping our Reconstruction and Development Programme, whilst using energy more efficiently becomes a "win-win" situation. For these reasons South Africa is responsive to external funding and, where necessary, expertise. Mass housing projects, large scale electrification, water provision and education programmes must be implemented speedily and South Africa sees these demands as creating significant opportunities for Joint Implementation (JI) initiatives. We support the concept of JI although not unconditionally and once these issues have been addressed, we can benefit from such joint projects. The concept of "joint activities" suits South Africa's needs for prompt implementation

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of its RDP programme as it would enable rapid start-ups of essential projects, whilst avoiding the current pitfalls of so-called "crediting".

Finally, Madam President, South Africa welcomes the opportunity of being part of this historic occasion, and believes that, in time, it will be able to play a meaningful role in pursuit of the ultimate goal to bestow a worthy heritage to generations to come.
