

REPORT FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Check Against Delivery

Statement Delivered on Behalf of the
Group of 77 and China

First Session of the Conference of the Parties to the
Framework Convention on Climate Change

delivered by

Hon. Angel C. Alcala
Secretary
Department of Environment and
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**COURAGE, COMMITMENT, VISION:
THE MORAL IMPERATIVE OF THE FIFTH
STANDPOINT
IN RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

On Behalf of the Group of 77 and China
and
On Behalf of the Philippines

By

Hon. Angel C. Alcala

Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources
Republic of the Philippines

Madame President, I speak not only on behalf of the Philippines but also on behalf of The Group of 77 and China. We congratulate and thank you Madame, the great city of Berlin and the Federal Government of Germany for successfully hosting this Conference. We sincerely appreciate your hospitality and leadership.

Madame President, The Group of 77 and China came to Berlin to cooperate with all State Parties in ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention. We are united on the conclusion that present commitments, in the Convention, remain unimplemented. We also came to underscore the importance to developing countries of technology transfer, of financial resources, and the intimate links of the environment and development.

These linkages are recognized in the Rio Declaration of 1992, in Agenda 21, and in our Convention's Article on Principles. In the universal effort to conserve the environment, we have been guided by, among others: a belief in nations' right to development; by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and; by the assurance that our Partners would consider the specific needs and special circumstances of developing country Parties.

Madame President, our Group presented at this Conference a draft decision on technology transfer. The draft decision is a reasonable document calling for concrete first steps to implement the Convention's provisions on this important subject. Its adoption will enhance the capacity of developing countries to respond to climate change.

Madame, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the agreement on the interim arrangements for an operating entity of the financial mechanism.

On joint implementation, our Group came to Berlin with a common position. One, only Annex I Parties have obligations to limit emissions. Two, joint

implementation under Article 4.2 (a) is applicable to Annex I Parties only. Three, no credits will be obtained by developed country Parties during the pilot phase. Four, joint activities to address climate change undertaken between developed country Parties and developing country Parties are different from joint implementation and basically fall under Article 4.5 of the Convention.

Regarding the fourth proposition, positions within our Group have evolved but our consensus holds on the other points that we agreed upon during the last INC meeting in New York.

Madame President, on the issue of adequacy of commitments, the Group of 77 and China is united on the proposition that in any attempt to strengthen Convention commitments, no new and additional obligations should be imposed on developing countries. However, Madame, I regret to say that our Group has not been in total agreement on all adequacy related matters. Thus, on this issue, I speak only as a representative of my country.

Madame President, The Philippines came here to Berlin to support the adoption of the AOSIS Protocol. The

paramount issue for us is the necessity for developed countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.

Reductions. Reductions by Annex I Parties.
Reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. Reductions by
20% of carbon dioxide emissions by 2005. This, Madame President, is the Philippine position. Thus, the Philippines proudly joined more than 70 countries to sponsor, under the able leadership of India, the Green Paper. We urge the adoption of this paper as a Conference Decision, such adoption being a minimum condition to make this Conference a success.

Madame President, we will do our part in responding to climate change. We are conducting an inventory of our greenhouse gas emissions. We are committed to the sustainable management of our forests and the protection of our coral reefs, thus conserving and enhancing carbon sinks. We have enshrined energy efficiency as a cornerstone of our future energy system. We are also completing a country action program on climate change. We are committed to implementing the Regional Action Plan developed in the recently concluded Asia Pacific Leaders' Conference on Climate Change. As President Fidel V.

Ramos, of the Philippines, observes: "By the very nature of the global warming problem, solutions and actions addressing climate change will definitely have to be on a global scale. The solution will thus have to be founded on international cooperation and national concern."

Madame President, as the Conference draws to a close, I recall that ancient Chinese cartographers employed five cardinal points on their maps: North, South, East, West, and the position where the observer stood. The first four were always relative to the fifth.

Madame President, we need a fifth standpoint: not of a neutral observer, not of indifference, but of courage, commitment and vision.

Courage to change wasteful consumption lifestyles. Courage to move away from obsolete energy systems. Courage to agree to a Berlin Green Mandate. A courage based on commitment. Commitment to sustainable development. Commitment to justice and equity. A commitment founded on vision: of nations and states united in one common purpose; of peoples and communities caring and loving, each other and our planet.

Madame President, this fifth standpoint is, in the words of one of your wise philosophers, a categorical imperative. Climate change is not only about economic efficiency. Climate change goes beyond the politics of nations. **Climate change, above all, is an ethical issue.**

Preventing climate change is important for both North and South; for all states - developing or developed, with economies tried or in transition; for all peoples and communities; for all men and women and children. It is important because this is a common world - our world, our planet, our home. And the sky - in the words of the great poet from the South, Pablo Neruda of Chile -

Our succulent sky
holds more than the clouds
and the void, with its odor of oxygen -
it holds a terrestrial stone,
it flashes out here and there
with its look of a dove
or a bell,
takes on magnitude,
the cutting edge of the wind:
an arrow in the phosphorus, a facet of
salt on the sky.

The sky is magnificent. The sea is beautiful. And the earth - our earth - what else have we got? Madame President, Distinguished Ministers and Delegates, what else have we got?

Madame President, we have three days left to conclude this Conference. We must not give up. After all, Madame, there is a place called Hope. And when the earth is in the balance, I am certain that those who believe in the place called Hope will come around. And then we will see the light which is yet unseen.

Madame President, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and on behalf of the Republic of the Philippines, I thank you. I thank Berlin. I thank Germany.