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(UGANDA)

**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES,
HON. BESUERI MULONDO TO THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION
ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

28 MARCH TO 7 APRIL 1995, BERLIN - GERMANY

Mr. President,

Allow me, on behalf of the Uganda delegation to congratulate you and members of the Bureau on your deserved election to officiate at this conference. Given your personal commitment, skills and experience, we are confident that you will guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion.

In the same spirit I express on behalf of the government and people of Uganda our deep and heartfelt appreciation to the Government and people of Germany and in particular the People of Berlin for hosting the conference and the hospitality accorded to us.

Mr. President,

It is almost three years now since our leaders adopted, in Rio de Janeiro, the important agreements in the area of Environment and Development. The signing by over 150 governments of the Framework Convention on Climate Change was one of the Summit's highlights. In doing this, Governments committed themselves to rationalize human activities in order to stem adverse climate change to save mother earth for the good of present and future generations.

The ultimate objective of the Climate Change Convention and related legal instruments that the conference of the Parties may adopt is to achieve the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the Climate system. To achieve the objective, the parties to the Convention, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibility, and their development priorities and circumstances committed themselves to undertake specific policies and measures to address this problem.

Mr. President

The objective of the Convention dictates that we should give the highest priority to the implementation of the provision of the Convention in a non-selective manner. It is, however, disappointing that the Rio political momentum has not been translated into practical policies and measures for implementation of the Convention. This is more so in the areas of concrete policies and programmes to reduce emissions and in financial and technology transfers to developing countries. Our presence here today Mr. President is to join the international community in rekindling the Rio de Janeiro spirit.

The Convention was the outcome of protracted negotiations and compromise. It is a delicate balance accommodating various views and concerns of member states. This notwithstanding, we should face up to the many difficult issues that remain to be thrashed out with courage and sincerity. We should, as a primary goal, focus our attention and efforts on implementation of the Convention. The Convention quite appropriately recognizes that the primary responsibility for implementing and giving effect to its provisions lies with the developed country parties. They have contributed the largest share of historical and current global emissions of greenhouse gases. It is only fitting that they take the lead by adopting policies and measures to redress climate change issues.

We are examining with interest the new and complex concept of joint implementation. We note that joint implementation, if embarked upon without caution, could tantamount to an attempt to shift the responsibilities of developed country parties to developing country parties. This would be most unacceptable and unwelcome.

Mr. President,

Developing countries including Uganda, are fully committed to implement their obligations under the convention even in the circumstances we find ourselves in because the cost of inaction would be too ghastly to contemplate. The existence of widespread poverty in these countries, which is partly due to inequalities in international economic relations - increasing external indebtedness in the case of Uganda standing at US \$ 3.152 billion as at 31 December 1994. 75% of which is owed to multilateral creditors and are therefore not eligible for restructuring or reduction, depreciating commodity prices, reverse flow of financial resources, lack of environmentally friendly technologies -, all undermine developing countries capacity and potential to play a meaningful role in environmental management. In this regard and considering that developing countries and Africa in particular have not been major perpetrators of the climate change phenomena, these countries should not be unduly burdened by mandatory measures to mitigate climate change but should instead be economically and technologically empowered to develop and meet the legitimate needs and aspirations of their people. Developed countries have an obligation to provide new and additional financial resources and environmentally friendly technologies to developing countries to enable them comply with their obligations under the convention. It is the conviction of my delegation that it is only on the basis of this approach that developing countries and in particular Africa can participate actively and meaningfully in efforts to redress climate change.

Mr. President,

Uganda is fully committed to the success of the Convention. We participated actively in the negotiations that culminated into the text of the Framework Convention and we have also been actively involved in the INC preparations for the first conference of Parties.

Uganda has carried out an inventory of greenhouse gases with assistance of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This study addressed the problem of greenhouse gases by source and sectors in reasonable detail. However it did not cover all sinks due to lack of funds. Financial assistance will be needed to complete this work. Preliminary conclusions from the study indicate that Uganda's greenhouse gas emissions due to energy combustion are clearly dominated by fuel wood combustion. This is so because of the heavy reliance on wood fuel as follows: households 75%, commercial 10%, industry 5% and charcoal production 10%.

The government has realized the implications of this heavy reliance on wood fuel and has now put highest priority on the development of Hydro-electric power. However, because of conditionalities imposed by the multilateral lending institutions the cost of electrical power is not affordable by majority of our people. We call upon the multilateral institutions, to join governments in mitigating climate change by synchronizing and coordinating development funding. Support for development of relevant and appropriate technologies and institutional building related to research in appropriate sectors such as renewable energy would be of great relevance to my country and would certainly yield global benefits.

You will all agree that these projects require enormous amounts of money which a least developed country such as ours can not readily come up with. We will therefore need international financial and technological assistance to translate our aspirations into concrete action.

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by re-emphasizing that the success of this Convention is so critical that we can not continue to prevaricate on the many weightly and important decisions which we must make. In particular, developed country parties have to demonstrate their credibility and seriousness by fulfilling all their commitments under the Convention. We in developing countries will do all within our national means to fulfil our commitments within the provisions of the Convention. In this, the assistance from developed country parties will be crucial as the extent to which we can implement our obligations under the Convention will depend on the level to which we are assisted financially and technologically. The future of mankind, the survival of entire communities in some cases, depend on this Convention. Let us shoulder our respective obligations in a manner that will endear us to future generations.

I THANK YOU SIR.