

STATEMENT TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

by **CHRISTOPHER IGA, MAYOR OF KAMPALA**

on behalf of the  
**SECOND MUNICIPAL LEADERS' SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**Berlin, 27-29 March 1995**

Plenary Session  
30 March 1995

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates

I am here this morning with a message from the cities of the world. A message of hope, of encouragement, and, we believe, a message of great urgency.

For the past several days, municipal leaders representing 159 local authorities in 65 countries have been gathered here in Berlin for the Second Municipal Leaders' Summit on Climate Change. Representing more than 250 million inhabitants of cities from every part of the world, we came to Berlin to reaffirm our commitment, as governments, to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions by at least 20% by the year 2005.

Indeed, some of the cities attending the Summit were able to report that they are well on their way to meeting and in some cases exceeding this target. It can be done.

We can also report a unanimous consensus among the cities who are tackling this problem that what is good for greenhouse-gas emission reductions is also good for the community.

Actions, policies, and programs to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions are good for job creation, for improving local air quality, for stimulating local economies, and for improving the health and quality of life in our communities.

There is very little time this morning, and you have our communiqué. Allow me therefore to emphasise two points:

First, we believe that targets are an important and necessary part of any strategy for preventing global warming. A strategy without a target is no strategy at all. As the Mayor of Toronto said yesterday, it is the 20% target that has focussed that city's efforts and which has stimulated the programs that have been implemented and which she believes will result in Toronto being able to reduce its greenhouse-gas emissions by 20% by 2005. It can be done. We can do it.

Without this target, how can the developing countries even be expected to take the rich nations seriously on this issue? Without this target, how can we keep ourselves on track for the much larger reductions that will be needed in the decades ahead?

We therefore support the AOSIS draft protocol and urge the Conference of the Parties to do likewise. This is the wrong time for a failure of leadership, for a lack of courage, or for the abandonment of specific targets for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

Secondly, we are here as local governments to offer our help. In both the short and the long term, the level of greenhouse-gas emissions is determined to a very great extent by factors under the direct control of local governments. We need to be at the table, as governments.

Some specific suggestions as to how this could be done are set out in our communiqué. Please help us to work together with you on this issue.

Our time is very short, both here this morning and in the more general sense. we think that we have come to a fork in the road in the evolution of our cities.

Our cities have been shaped by our ability to deliver large quantities of fuel and electricity to small areas. Now, global warming, or the prevention of global warming, is about to transform cities in ways that will be as profound and as far-reaching as the industrial revolution itself.

In one direction, the direction in which our current trajectory will take us, greenhouse-gas emissions from human activity will continue to grow. In this future, cities will bear the brunt of both the direct and indirect effects of global warming. Well over half the population of the rich nations live in cities and by the year 2000, over half the global population will be urban dwellers. Coastal cities will be particularly vulnerable to flooding and storm surges, but all cities will be affected by global warming and the changes it will force on the ecosystems from which city dwellers draw their water, food, and fibre. Cities will also experience the social dislocations and disruptions caused as ecosystem changes displace populations and ecological refugees head from the countryside to the city, from south to north, and from poor to rich nations.

In another direction, greenhouse-gas emissions from human activity will begin to decline and will continue to fall as human civilisation develops sustainable energy and urban systems. The worst effects of global warming will be anticipated and prevented through a conscious redesign of community, of technology, and of international social contract. In this direction cities will be the centre of change. In this future ecologically sustainable cities will emerge as the key to new modes of civilisation. Global warming will be averted, not only because urban dwellers will adopt advanced and environmentally sound energy technologies, but also because cities themselves will transform their physical forms and spatial structures in ways that reduce the energy intensity of the community.

We, leaders of local governments, have chosen to move in this direction. We ask you, the national governments, to support us. If you choose not to, then at least do not hinder our efforts.