

THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF PARTIES ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON
CLIMATE CHANGE : BERLIN, GERMANY: 28 MARCH - 7 APRIL, 1995.

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE D. NORMAN, MP : ZIMBABWE MINISTER FOR
TRANSPORT AND ENERGY.

INTRODUCTION

IT IS INDEED AN HONOUR TO BE ABLE TO SHARE MY VIEWS, WITH THE
WORLD'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROTECTION OF
THE ENVIRONMENT IN GENERAL AND THE ATMOSPHERE IN PARTICULAR. I
WISH TO THANK THE ORGANISERS OF THIS VERY IMPORTANT CONFERENCE
FOR THE EXCELLENT FACILITIES MADE AVAILABLE TO MY DELEGATION
DURING THEIR STAY IN BERLIN.

IN RECENT YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN GROWING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE
IMPORTANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF VARIOUS ISSUES RELATING TO CLIMATE
CHANGE. INDEED CLIMATE CHANGE IS ONE OF THE CENTRAL AREAS OF
CONCERN THAT IS PART OF CURRENT WORLD WIDE ATTENTION ON THE THEME
OF ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT CLIMATE
CHANGE WILL BE THE MOST DECIDING FACTOR ON THE FUTURE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF MUCH OF OUR PLANET'S RESOURCES RELATING TO
BIODIVERSITY, WATER, FORESTS, LAND AND OCEANS AS WELL AS IN THE
VARIOUS SECTORIAL ACTIVITIES LIKE AGRICULTURE AND THE
SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES OF OUR NATIONS.

AS MOST OF YOU MAY BE AWARE, 80% OF ZIMBABWE'S POPULATION LIVES
IN THE RURAL AREAS AND DEPEND DIRECTLY UPON THE LAND FOR
SURVIVAL. SUCH DEPENDENCE ON CLIMATE SENSITIVE SYSTEMS FOR FOOD

PRODUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS REDUCING THE REGION'S CAPACITY TO COPE WITH BASIC FOOD DEMANDS AS THE MOST VITAL INGREDIENT, WATER , REMAINS AN UNPREDICTABLE ELEMENT MAINLY DUE TO RECURRENT DROUGHTS. THIS RENDERS OUR NATION EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO ANY CHANGE IN THE CLIMATE REGIME. WITH LIMITED HUMAN, INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES, ZIMBABWE IS LEAST ABLE TO COPE WITH ANY WEATHER RELATED CATASTROPHES.

OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO US IN ZIMBABWE TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE, IS THE PREDICTION OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF CLIMATIC CHANGE AND VARIABILITY ON THE EXISTING FRAGILE ENVIRONMENT. OUR NATIONAL ECONOMY WAS BROUGHT TO A VIRTUAL COLLAPSE DURING THE 1991/92 DROUGHT WHICH ALSO DEVASTATED THE TEN MEMBER STATES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN COORDINATION CONFERENCE. HUGE SUMS OF FOREIGN AID, EARMARKED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HAD TO BE DIVERTED TO FOOD IMPORTS FOR BOTH HUMANS AND DOMESTIC/WILD ANIMALS; 60% OF THE NATIONAL HERD WAS LOST; A VARIETY OF FLORA AND FAUNA PERISHED; CROPS AND STOCK FELL VICTIMS TO DRUG RESISTANT DISEASES, AND WE WITNESSED A MASSIVE ACCELERATION OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION. IN SHORT, MR. CHAIRMAN WE WERE UNPREPARED AND ILL-EQUIPPED FOR SUCH AN EXTREME WEATHER EVENT WHOSE IMPACTS WILL CONTINUE FOR YEARS TO COME.

I THEREFORE TRUST THAT OUR SCIENTISTS WILL CONTINUE TO WORK VERY CLOSELY WITH THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC), SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVICE (SBSTA) AND SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR IMPLEMENTATION (SBI) IN IMPROVING

THE METHODOLOGIES FOR REGIONAL IMPACTS ASSESSMENTS IN ORDER TO DEVELOP FEASIBLE RESPONSE OPTIONS AT A NATIONAL LEVEL. SUCH CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH SCIENTISTS FROM OTHER REGIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS WILL ASSIST US IN PREPARING OUR NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS.

A RELATED MATTER OF EVEN GREATER IMPORTANCE IS THAT OF CAPACITY BUILDING TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE. SUCH CAPACITY HAS TO BE BUILD RAPIDLY IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS AND DISCIPLINES. FIRSTLY, CAPACITY HAS TO BE BUILD FOR EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC). SECONDLY, NATIONAL EXPERTS NEED TO SHARE EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO BETTER MANAGE THE RESPONSES TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN A MORE HOLISTIC MANNER. IN THIS REGARD I WOULD SUGGEST CLOSER NORTH-SOUTH COOPERATION NEEDS TO BE FOSTERED.

ZIMBABWE, LIKE MOST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IS FACED WITH A GROWING POPULATION, A DECLINING ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE, UNFAVOURABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS, INSUFFICIENT FOOD SUPPLIES LEADING TO A VICIOUS CYCLE OF POVERTY. IN ORDER TO BREAK THIS CYCLE, ALL EFFORTS ARE PUT TO POVERTY ERADICATION; IMPROVEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL PERFORMANCE; FOOD SECURITY; STRENGTHENING OF INSTITUTIONAL AND HUMAN CAPACITIES; IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, INFORMATION, EDUCATION ; AND GENERAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE POLITICAL STABILITY.

MR. CHAIRMAN, WHILE ON THE TOPIC OF POVERTY I WISH TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT WHEREAS DOUBLING OF THE POPULATION IN

THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WILL REPRESENT ABOUT 90% OF THE POPULATION GROWTH WORLDWIDE AND WILL HAVE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS ON BOTH THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIES OF THOSE NATIONS, THE IMPACT OF ONLY 10% POPULATION INCREASE IN THE DEVELOPED NATIONS WILL HAVE A DEVASTATING IMPACT ON THE GLOBAL CLIMATE. HENCE OUR POPULATION GROWTH IN THE SOUTH VERSUS GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS IS AS CRUCIAL AS THE CONSUMPTION PATTERNS AND LIFESTYLES OF THE NORTH IN THE CONSIDERATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSES.

THE ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT THEREFORE ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC). IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE GOVERNMENT FACILITATED THE URGENT SIGNING AND RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION AS EARLY AS 1992. IN FACT , MR. CHAIRMAN, ZIMBABWE BECAME THE FIFTH PARTY TO DEPOSIT ITS INSTRUMENTS OF RATIFICATION.

AFRICA'S CONTRIBUTION TO GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IS CURRENTLY VERY SMALL, BUT WILL GROW IN FUTURE AS THE MEASURES TO ERADICATE POVERTY AND ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH, WILL ENTAIL GREATER INDUSTRIALISATION. ZIMBABWE, OR INDEED ANY DEVELOPING NATION CANNOT BE DENIED ITS RIGHT TO ECONOMIC GROWTH, NOR MUST THIS RIGHT BE CONSTRAINED BY UNJUST MEASURES TO REDUCE GLOBAL RISKS WHEN THE PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN PRINCIPALLY CREATED BY THE FAVOURED INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES.

ZIMBABWE THEREFORE STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT THE COMMITMENTS IN ARTICLE 4.2.A) AND B) OF THE CLIMATE CONVENTION ARE INADEQUATE AND HENCE MUST BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED WITHOUT IMPOSING OR SHIFTING COMMITMENTS OF THE COUNTRIES IN ANNEX 1 TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. IN THIS REGARD, MR. CHAIRMAN, OUR SYMPATHY GOES TO THE OASIS COUNTRIES FOR TABLING THEIR DRAFT PROTOCOL. THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE MOST VULNERABLE TO THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE WHILE THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS CATASTROPHE HAVE THE LUXURY OF DISCUSSING "SOME COST EFFECTIVE MEASURES OF REDUCING GREENHOUSE GASES ABROAD" AT THE SAME TIME MAINTAINING THEIR STATUS QUO. MR. CHAIRMAN, THE DEBATE ON ADEQUACY OF COMMITMENTS CANNOT BE COMPLETE WITHOUT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ON LIFESTYLES AND PREFERENCES WHICH ARE THE VERY REASONS OF US BEING HERE TODAY.

REALISING OUR LEVEL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NEW AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS TO ENABLE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION. ZIMBABWE, TO DATE, HAS ENJOYED TWO GEF FUNDED PILOT PROJECTS ; 1) RURAL LIGHTING USING PHOTOVOLTAICS CELLS AND 2) CC-TRAIN PROJECT ADMINISTERED BY UNDP AND UNITAR WHICH IS PART OF THE ENABLING ACTIVITIES UNDER THE CONVENTION. THE US COUNTRY STUDY INITIATIVE ALSO PROVIDES A FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATIONAL COMMUNICATION.

MR. CHAIRMAN, AS THESE THREE PROJECTS ARE IN THEIR PILOT PHASES, MY GOVERNMENT IS READY TO SHARE OUR EXPERIENCES WITH ANY DELEGATIONS PRESENT. FINANCIAL RESOURCES PERMITTING, ZIMBABWE

TRUSTS THAT SUCH INITIATIVES WILL BE EXPANDED TO BENEFIT OTHER PARTIES IN FUTURE.

ZIMBABWE HOPES THAT SUCH EXPERIENCES GAINED FROM THESE PROJECTS WILL ASSIST POLICY MAKERS IN THEIR SEARCH FOR APPROPRIATE RESPONSE OPTIONS WHICH ARE FINANCIALLY REALIZABLE. SIMILARLY THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN DEVELOPING SOUND APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE DOMESTIC SECTOR IS CRUCIAL. IN ADDITION, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT NEW AND SOUND TECHNOLOGIES SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED AT NON-COMMERCIAL RATES TO DEVELOPING NATIONS IN ORDER THAT THEY ADDRESS THEIR PRIME GOAL OF INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION, EMPLOYMENT CREATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION.

THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THAT IT HAS A DEFINITE STAKE IN THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TO ENSURE THAT THE LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS OF THE WORLD ARE WELL MANAGED, UTILIZED AND CONSERVED IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER. THUS ISSUES OF BOTH INTER-GENERATIONAL AND INTRA-GENERATIONAL EQUITY ARE IN THE FORE-FRONT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS. INDUSTRIALISED NATIONS HAVE BY FAR BEEN THE LARGEST CONTRIBUTORS OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INTO THE ATMOSPHERE AND THUS SHOULD TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN SUCH EMISSION REDUCTIONS. NEVERTHELESS THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE WILL BE UNEVENLY DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD REGARDLESS OF THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF A NATION. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE POORER FINANCIAL STATUS OF MOST DEVELOPING NATIONS, WE SHOULD NOT BE OBLIGED TO MEET THIS DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE RISKS.

A RIPPLE EFFECT OF THESE RISKS RESULTING FROM WEATHER RELATED UNFAVOURABLE EVENTS IS THE ISSUE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REFUGEES, PESTS AND DISEASE. IN AFRICA ENVIRONMENTAL REFUGEES ARE MOVING IN ALMOST ALL DIRECTIONS IN SEARCH OF FOOD AND SHELTER. THIS, COUPLED WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUFFERING, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INSTABILITY AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS HAS RESULTED IN CIVIL UNREST. MR. CHAIRMAN, IN ORDER FOR US TO BE ABLE TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND VARIABILITY, AFRICA AS A WHOLE MUST ENDEAVOUR TO MAINTAIN A POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LEADING TO SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ITS PEOPLE. WITHOUT THIS BASIC INGREDIENT, WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE A CONTINENT OF AID RELIEF.

THE SUCCESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNFCCC WILL THEREFORE DEPEND ON THE LEVEL OF COMMITMENT BY THE DEVELOPED NATIONS TO REDRESS THE NORTH-SOUTH INEQUALITIES BY SHOULDERING THEIR FULL RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMITMENTS IN ARTICLE 4.2.A) AND B) AND PROVIDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT UNDER ARTICLE 4.2.3..

THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE CONVENTION WHICH IS TO ENSURE POVERTY ERADICATION THROUGH SOUND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

I HOPE THAT IT IS ENVISAGED AND ACCEPTED THAT TOGETHER WE STRIVE TO FIND ACCEPTABLE , EQUITABLE SOLUTIONS TO THE MANAGEMENT OF THIS GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE .

LASTLY MR. CHAIRMAN, FOR US TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS ARE URGED TO RATIFY THE CONVENTION. IN THIS REGARD ZIMBABWE WILL BE WILLING TO NETWORK WITH OTHER EXPERTS IN THE REGION UNTIL SUCH A TIME THAT ADEQUATE CAPACITY IS AVAILABLE .