

Botswana

STATEMENT BY THE ASSISTANT MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, LANDS AND HOUSING HON, MRS M.N. NASHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST SESSION OF CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, MINISTERIAL SEGMENT 5 - 7 APRIL 1995 - BERLIN, GERMANY

Madam President,

Your Excellencies

Distinguished delegates,

Allow me to add my voice to the many who spoke before me, in acknowledging with deep appreciation the hospitality of the German Government as well as the people of Berlin. We shall definitely take home with us fond memories of your country and the manner in which you have guided the proceedings of this Conference. The importance and seriousness attached to the issue of global warming and climate change was demonstrated by the adoption of an international treaty in the form of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in May 1992 in New York and the signing of the same by more than 150 States during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro in June, 1992.

We note that initial steps have been taken to make preparations for the effective implementation of the Convention as evidenced by the several sessions that followed the adoption of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties (COP) as the supreme body of the UNFCCC has greater responsibility to ensure that the implementation of the Convention does address the concerns of the international community with regard to the issues of global warming and climate change and meets the obligations of the UNFCCC. The objective of the Convention with regard to stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere should be our major preoccupation.

The Convention as it stands now is far from meeting the expectations of many. Though delicately negotiated, the Convention has failed to come out with specific commitments, especially from developed country Parties which contributed the largest share towards the current problem of increased

anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

This lack of definite commitments was the major concern raised by many delegations, especially those from developing countries at the time of adoption of the Convention. It is our view that the polluter-pays-more principle should be maintained, as in our view, it is the only viable method of finding a lasting solution. We therefore call for more definite commitments from developed country Parties as listed in Annex I of the Convention, in order for us to find a solution sooner rather than later.

Turning to specific Articles of the Convention, you will recall that Article 4 on Commitments met with great opposition during the initial negotiation stages of the Convention and during the subsequent Sessions.

Concerted efforts by governments, nations and peoples are required to ensure that the momentum gained in Rio is not lost.

It is proper for the Conference of the Parties (COP) to come out with new ideas to strengthen it appropriately so that it can effectively meet its objective. I therefore appeal to COP to make a thorough review and come out with more definite and specific commitments under Article 4 of the Convention, to that extent, we support the proposal for this COP to give a mandate for the negotiation of a protocol to strengthen the Convention.

The political backing that has been perhaps lacking during the preparatory Sessions for the First Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 1) is now being provided by this COP as reflected by the composition of delegations from both developed and developing country Parties.

Mme President,

Financial resources and transfer of technology are central to the effective implementation of the Convention. It is imperative that both developed and developing country Parties like Botswana should carry out their obligations within the Convention, taking into account their differentiated responsibilities. Notwithstanding our individual responsibilities and roles, it has to be emphasized that, solidarity in dealing with the problem of climate change is vitally important to safeguard the atmosphere and the environment in order to ensure sustainable development.

Developing country Parties like Botswana cannot do much without the provision of adequate resources and the transfer of relevant environmentally sound technologies to address climate change. The domestic problems associated with socio-economic development and poverty eradication are first and foremost overriding priorities and cannot be overlooked.

It is therefore clear that developing country Parties will not be able to meet their obligations under the Convention unless adequate financial resources are provided to them in accordance with Article 4.7.

Turning now to the hitherto controversial issue of Joint Implementation Madam President, it is Botswanas view that developed country Parties should begin to face this issue squarely. This remains the position of the Group of 77, and no amount of hesitation will deter us from putting pressure where we believe it belongs.

Finally Madam President, my delegation wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate the city of Bonn for having been chosen as the seat of our Permanent Secretariat. We trust the Germans to provide not just a location but a home for the secretariat, for many more years to come.

Thank you