



CANADA

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The Permanent Mission of Canada  
to the United Nations  
at Geneva

La Mission permanente du Canada  
auprès des Nations Unies  
à Genève

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**Sergio Marchi**  
**Minister of the Environment**  
**Canada**

Conference of Parties Statement  
Geneva, Switzerland  
July 17, 1996

**Check Against Delivery**

Mr. Chairman, Monsieur le President,

It is Canada's hope that this important gathering will help to bring a sharper focus to the dilemma of climate change. In keeping with that hope, I would like to focus my remarks on three essential elements.

Firstly, it is Canada's belief that science has spoken in a voice that is loud and clear.

Our national government, including provincial and territorial jurisdictions, strongly supports the findings of the IPCC's Second Assessment Report as the most authoritative and comprehensive analysis of climate change to date. It is our belief that humanity will ignore its findings at its own risk.

We accept the scientific view that humanity's influence on the globe's climate system represents a potentially dangerous stress on the global ecosystem, and has detrimental implications for human health.

Indeed, a stark picture of what could be in store for global human health as a result of climate change was painted for us last week in a report released by the World Health Organization.

In Canada, we are about to launch a Country Study on the impacts and adaptations to climate variability and change, and we are conducting regional studies on the effects of climate change.

One such examination on Canada's Mackenzie River Basin has just been completed.

With a total area of 1.8 million square kilometres, the Mackenzie is the largest drainage basin in Canada, and in fact, one of the largest in the world.

The findings show that changes in climate are already starting to affect our environment and way of life, particularly in the Canadian Arctic .

The area has experienced a warming trend of 1.5 degrees Celsius within the current century, and there is evidence that this has lowered lake levels and thawed permafrost.

The study, a summary of which is now available, concludes that there could be radical alterations to the area's ecosystem in the event of a doubling of carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere.

The question then becomes: if climate change is capable of fundamentally altering the character of one corner of the world, what could it do to the world as a whole?

While both the rate and distribution of climate change worldwide is still uncertain, Canada does not look upon this uncertainty as an excuse for delaying action. Let there be no mistake. The threat of climate change is real and present. And the cost in human discomfort and suffering is incalculable.

Secondly, just as we accept this threat as real, we must also accept the reality that our efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions are not working as well as we expected.

While progress has been made in reducing emissions, it is clear that we are not moving fast enough or far enough in our collective efforts.

Like most developed countries, Canada is experiencing difficulty in meeting its commitments. Despite efforts to date, current analysis indicates that without further measures, Canada's greenhouse gas emissions at the turn of the century could be about 13 per cent higher than 1990 levels.

There is little consolation in the fact that we will be in the company of the majority of Annex I nations in not meeting our current commitments.

Canadians indicated, in a recent survey that they believe governments and international institutions must show strong leadership in addressing climate change.

Their concerns tell us that Canada --like other nations --must work harder, faster and smarter to reduce its emissions.

However, I wouldn't want you to think that we are standing still. Canada has an active national program of initiatives aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. Canada is also an active participant in the Climate Technology Initiative, which we view as an important mechanism to enhance the availability and use of existing and new climate-friendly technologies.

And for us, developing clean technologies, improving energy efficiency, and increasing the use of alternative energy sources, will continue to be a public policy priority.

Moreover, we have established the 20% Club, a group of Canadian municipalities committed to a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels. The 20 % Club now includes large cities like Toronto, Vancouver and Regina.

Canada's commitment to involving industry, environmental organizations, and individual communities will continue. Indeed, it must continue if we are to meet with success.

Finally, there is no room for complacency on the issue before us. All of us must strengthen our efforts as we accelerate work towards a post-2000 strategy at COP3. If we are to protect our climate for future generations, an effective global response is required.

Canada firmly believes that the Second Assessment Report must be used as a basis for pressing action to further the implementation of the Convention and to make progress on the Berlin Mandate.

For our part, a Canadian meeting of federal, provincial and territorial energy and environment ministers will be convened this Fall to assess where we are, and more importantly, to chart the course ahead.

Getting our own house in order is a priority for the Canadian government, and it will be guided by principles of openness and transparency.

And our international efforts should be no different. After all, when we are addressing climate change, we are talking about a global bottom line.

And this bottom line takes precedence over individual credits, debits, and differences between countries. It is time for all of us - governments, industry, environmental groups, and citizens - to do better.

Failure cannot, and must not, be an option.

# RECORD OF MINISTERIAL SEGMENT

COUNTRY: Canada

NAME OF SPEAKER: Mr. Sergio Marchi

DAY: 17/07/96

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE-TAKER: Lo

STATEMENT PICKED UP? ☒

## AGBM-RELATED ISSUES

The speaker indicated:	<input type="checkbox"/> a preference for an amendment <input type="checkbox"/> a preference for a protocol <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> that s/he cannot indicate a preference at this time <input type="checkbox"/> AOSIS <input type="checkbox"/> EU	Comments:
The protocol/ other legal instrument should include:	<input type="checkbox"/> mandatory policies and measures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> voluntary policies and measures	Policies or measures specified:
Does the country support any particular target?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: _____ % by _____ year <input type="checkbox"/> no	Comments: (see 20% Club, below) - not yet meeting w/ commitments. In fact, 13% higher than 1990 levels.

## SBSTA-RELATED ISSUES

Reaching targets within the country by the year 2000 (Annex I Parties)	Comments: Within the current century, there is evidence that parts of Canada has experienced an alteration in its climate. * launching country study on impacts and adaptations to climate variability by acting participant of CTI. - established 20% Club, group of Canadian municipalities committed to 20% reduction of gas emissions from 1990 levels.
Development and transfer of technology	Comments: - This fall, a self-assessment will establish where they are, and chart course ahead.
IPCC Second Assessment Report (SAR)	Comments: supports it as the most authoritative & comprehensive analysis of climate change to date. - accept humanity's detrimental influence on the globe's climate system. - must be used as a basis for pressing action to further implement the convention.

## SBI-RELATED ISSUES

Should the GEF be the permanent financial mechanism?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	Comments:
Activities Implemented Jointly (AIJ)	<input type="checkbox"/> in favour of pilot phase <input type="checkbox"/> distinction made between JI/AIJ	Comments:
Preparation of non-Annex I communications	Comments:	

OTHER COMMENTS: concludes in a clean and memorable fashion.  
 "Failure, cannot, and must not, be an option."