

Mozambique

STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. BERNARDO P. FERRAZ
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Madam President,
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates

I am honoured and privileged to address to the first Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention.

Allow me, Madam President, to start by expressing our sincere gratitude to the Federal Republic of Germany and its people for hosting this very important first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and for the hospitality extended to my delegation since the beginning of the conference. Since I am on the floor now, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Federal Republic of Germany particularly the City of Bonn for having been selected as the host city for the Permanent Secretariat of the Convention. We do not have any doubt that Bonn will offer us the same hospitality as we are having here in Berlin. Our recognition is also extended to the INC particularly his chairman, Ambassador Raul Estrada Oyela, for a very excellent preparatory work done.

Madam President

For a too long time the war has devastated and destroyed the social fiber and infra-structures in Mozambique. But we are experiencing a more stable and peaceful situation now. We face now different types of challenges: challenges to adequately respond to the needs and expectations of an extremely impoverished population requesting from the government the attention for and the satisfaction of their basic needs. It will not come, therefore, as surprise to you if I say that my government's central priority is the alleviation of its population from absolute poverty, now and for the future. But Mozambique's population is basically rural, living from agriculture and wildlife. However, water management, agricultural production and wildlife management are almost impracticable in many parts of Mozambique today because of unpredictable weather conditions which lead to simultaneous occurrences of droughts and floods in different parts of the country.

Mozambique possesses one of the longest coast line in Africa, with more than 2600 kilometers. This coast line forms the backbone of the economic and social development of Mozambique. It is along the coast line where 3/4 of the population of Mozambique resides, mainly because of its richness in marine resources and vast arable land. Such a situation indicates the vulnerability of the people of Mozambique to climate change as a result of a possible sea level rise.

Mozambique strongly believes and endorses the conceptual principle that all nations have to join efforts in addressing global environmental problems, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities. It is mainly because of that that we have ratified the framework convention on climate change whose instruments of ratification are in the process of submission. We are currently preparing our country study on climate change with the assistance of the Government of the United States of America, after having done the study on ozone depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol. Therefore, Mozambique associates itself to the world's effort to eliminate, in the shortest possible time, all the elements that degrade the climate of our planet.

We notice with regret that the commitments of Annex I countries in addressing the objectives of the convention are still inadequate for reducing the risk of global climate change. Although a clear and definite scientific picture on the change patterns in the climate of our planet does not yet exist, we request the Annex I countries not to hide behind scientific uncertainties which can be a delaying excuse for not acting immediately. There is no doubt that the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere has increased in the last few years, which I believe is enough evidence for us all to act now. I would like to recall and repeat the appeal of Prof. Obasi when addressing this conference on its first day, when he said: I quote: " we cannot afford to fail; we must not fail" end of quote.

Madam President,

The joint implementation concept sounds very appealing at its first look. In reality however, it is a confusing one for some of us. Joint implementation can be viewed in two ways, which when looked closely, seem to diverge. If the criteria of joint implementation are not spelt out in a careful detail the developing countries may feel threatened with a possible shift by the Annex I countries from their responsibilities as major contributors of ozone depleting and climate change emissions in the world. Besides that need for clarification in the joint implementation criteria the developing countries need to have time enough to see the implications of joint implementation before their formal commitment. Mozambique believes that joint implementation can positively contribute to the reduction of the present risk of climate change if properly implemented. We support the proposal of joint implementation pilot situations.

Joint implementation has to add value to national development programmes and can not impose any future commitments to developing countries or somehow compromise the ultimate objective of the net reduction of global greenhouse gases concentrations. Factors such as adequacy of incremental cost and the role of the private sector require a considerable debate. Possibilities for joint implementation should be further searched in the context of North-South, North-North and South-South relations.

We think that adequate resources should be made available to developing countries to enable them to comply with their commitments under the convention. Additional funds should be disposed to address adaptation measures, response strategies and vulnerability assessment.

Finally, Madam President, Mozambique believes that any practical measure to address climate change has to have a strong component of capacity building if it is to be successful. This is particularly important in most of the African countries like myne, where the level of education is still far lagging as compared to the needs.

Thank you, Madam President.