



**Ministerial segment of the
First Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate Change**

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AUSTRALIA

Speech by

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Check against delivery

Australia acknowledges that there is no greater global environmental concern than the threat of climate change.

IPCC scientists agree global warming is inevitable. While there is uncertainty about the impacts, there is no doubt about the risks. Given our geographical location, we are well aware of, and sensitive to the special vulnerability of many of the small South Pacific island States.

It is the challenge of climate change that brings us together in Berlin. We are here to work together to meet this challenge, manage the impacts, and reduce the threat.

We have a framework within which to do this.

Now we need to flesh out that framework in a way that will result in a sustainable future for humankind and protect our natural environment. In Australia's view, we must leave Berlin with a clear mandate to begin negotiations on a protocol that will allow us to take the next step towards achievement of the Convention's ultimate objective.

In moving forward, it will be vital that we have the best available science and technical information. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has provided this for us in the past. Australia believes that it should continue to do so in the future. We will continue to contribute to climate change science.

One of the requirements of the Convention is for Parties to communicate information on national measures.

Our first national communication revealed that with our existing response measures, Australia would not meet the implied target in the Convention.

Australia's national communication showed that, without implementing any abatement measures, emissions would have grown 14 per cent from 1990 levels by the year 2000. And it showed that measures which Australia had put in place would cut that growth by half, to 7 per cent. -

Madam President,

We Australians pride ourselves on our persistence. We don't give up easily. Notwithstanding the reality of our heavy dependence on fossil fuels, we have said that we can do more, we are doing more and we will do more.

Last week I announced a package of additional measures which we called **Greenhouse 21C** - an action plan for the 21st century. It will bring us to within 3 per cent of the implied target. This will represent an 11 per cent reduction on business as usual emissions.

We will be monitoring the effectiveness of our greenhouse response annually, and assessing the need for additional measures. Australia's approach to climate change has been a dynamic one and will continue to evolve.

The fundamental principle of our latest package of reduction measures is a national partnership between all levels of government in Australia, with industry, and with the Australian community.

We bring the same partnership approach to this conference. Climate change is a global problem. Climate change requires a global partnership. No Party or single grouping of Parties can solve this problem alone.

Two of the key issues that we are addressing - the review of the adequacy of Article 4.2(a) and (b) and joint implementation - are vitally important to the development of an effective global partnership.

On both these issues, Australia has come to Berlin with a very clear objective.

We want to ensure that there is progress. We want to see an agreement to take an effective next step towards achieving the Convention's ultimate objective.

Joint implementation would provide new opportunities to expand our global partnership, to mitigate climate change and allow for the wider application of climate change technologies. A positive outcome would see the launch of a pilot phase, which need not involve the allocation of credits. I believe this can be accomplished in a way that will provide assurances to developing country Parties, that joint implementation will not be used to avoid or shift commitments from developed country Parties.

Another important aspect of this global partnership is the participation of all parties. While developed country parties should take the lead, developing countries should also contribute in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. It is clear that we will not achieve the Convention's Objective without such a partnership.

Madam President, Australia agrees that the current commitments are not enough. And the first step to addressing this problem is to decide on a negotiating mandate to strengthen those commitments. And a mandate on which all Parties are agreed.

Australia considers this mandate should:

- be guided by the principles set out in Article 3 of the Convention;
- differentiate clearly between the responsibilities of developed and developing countries;
- leave open all options for achieving strengthening of commitments, such as policies, measures, targets, timetables, so that reductions of greenhouse gas emissions are achieved;

- require a protocol to be completed by 1998 at the latest; and
- provide for regular review of the protocol.

But the key element of any mandate, and the key to finding a solution to the problem we all confront, is cooperation - partnership.

Global problems require global solutions.

Some of us can and should do more than others. Some have to take the lead. But in the final analysis, we have to move forward together.