

**STATEMENT BY J.T.N. SABARI, KENYAN PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR
THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, AT THE
FIRST MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE,
BERLIN, GERMANY 28 MARCH TO 7 APRIL 1995**

Madame President,

Hon. Ministers,

Your Excellencies the Ambassadors,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Madame President, firstly I want to congratulate you for being elected the President of this first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Secondly, Madame President, I want to thank the German Government through you for hosting this meeting and for putting at our disposal such excellent facilities.

Madame President, this first meeting of the Conference of the Parties is an important one not only because it will make crucial decisions that will facilitate the implementation of the Convention for the benefit of the present and future generations but also because it is really part of the implementation of Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The convening of the meeting shows that the spirit of UNCED is still alive and that the nations of the world must continue to sustain the momentum gained at Rio de Janeiro.

Madame President, the Kenya Government is most grateful to the United Nations and other organizations for their role in the establishment of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change which negotiated the Convention. It is my hope that the efforts of the negotiators of the Convention and the scientists who provided the scientific information required by the Committee will be rewarded through effective implementation of the Convention.

Madame President, it is my great hope that the Ministers attending this meeting will achieve consensus on the difficult subjects that the Committee of the Whole which has been preparing recommendations for this meeting could find no common ground for agreement.

Review of adequacy of commitments contained in Article 4.2 (a) and (b) relating to Annex I Parties is one of such subjects where consensus eluded the Committee. Madame President, it is the view of Kenya Government that these commitments for Annex 1 Parties are inadequate to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention, which is “to achieve in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent anthropogenic interference with the climate system”. Madame President, the scientific information contained in the 1990, 1992 and 1994 reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) justifies a review of the adequacy of commitments as called for in Article 4.2 (d). In its 1990 report the IPCC specifically recommended an immediate 60%

reduction in the emissions from human activities of long-lived greenhouse gases if stabilization of concentrations was to be achieved at the 1990 levels. Granted that, from an economic point of view, 60% reduction was and is still untenable, Kenya Government fully supports the statement made by Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on this issue at INC 11. Kenya Government also wishes to reiterate that the AOSIS Draft Protocol proposal is most reasonable and attainable. Reduction of emissions by 20% by the year 2005 should be seen only as a first step in implementing commitments made at Rio in 1992. We also wish to restate that there should be no additional commitments for developing countries unless and until Annex 1 countries have fully implemented their commitments in compliance with Article 4.2 (a) and (b) of the Convention.

Madame President, climate is an important resource. It is much more so for countries like Kenya, whose economies are heavily dependent on rain-fed agriculture. Any changes in climate could, among other things, affect agricultural production in a way that is still not yet clear to us. This could affect the ability of a nation to feed itself. It is for this reason that Kenya wants commitments for Annex 1 Parties as contained in Article 4.2 (a) and (b) strengthened, with the hope that stabilization of concentrations of greenhouse gases can be achieved as stipulated in the objective of the Convention, that is, “.....within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner”.

I wish now, Madame President, to highlight a few specific areas in which Kenya is likely to be adversely affected by climate change.

The IPCC in its 1990 First Assessment Report predicts that there may be a decline in agricultural production in regions of present-day vulnerability that are least able to adjust. About 70% of land in Kenya is arid or semi-arid and very vulnerable to climate change. Climate change is likely to lower further the already low agricultural potential in these areas.

According to the IPCC, relatively small climate change can cause large water resource problems in many areas, especially arid and semi-arid regions and those humid areas where demand for water and pollution has led to water scarcity. Climate change can therefore be expected to cause fresh water supply problems in the 70% of the land in Kenya which is arid or semi-arid.

Madame President, of all the natural disasters that Kenya is exposed to, drought is the most destructive. It causes famine, it kills livestock and wild animals, hydroelectric power generation is badly affected which in turn disrupts our industrial activities; the list is endless. A relevant and important question comes to mind: is the severity and frequency of droughts going to increase under the human-induced climate change? I know scientists do not have an answer to this question now, but I hope they will, soon.

Under the present climate the malaria endemic areas in Kenya are the low to medium altitude areas where temperature and moisture are favourable for mosquito breeding. With the predicted global warming, it should be expected that non-endemic high altitude areas would become more favourable for mosquito breeding. These areas could become endemic to malaria in the decades to come.

Kenya is committed to the implementation of the Convention. My country's ratification of the Convention is an indication of the concern that the President of Kenya, H.E. Daniel T. arap Moi, has for the preservation of the earth's climate. Further, in August 1994, the same month we ratified the Convention, we established a multi-disciplinary climate change activities co-ordination committee with membership drawn from the relevant government ministries/institutions and non-governmental organizations. The committee which has started its work in earnest, will, among other things, assist the Government in the implementation of all aspects of the commitments and other obligations in the Convention.

As you may recall, Kenya was among the country Parties that had offered to host the Permanent Secretariat for the Framework Convention on Climate Change. However, in the interest of international partnership, co-operation and transparency in global distribution of environmentally related permanent secretariats, we have considered this matter very carefully and have decided to honourably withdraw the offer to host the Climate Change

Secretariat and instead concentrate on our bid to host the Permanent Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity for which we appeal for your support. We hope and trust that when decision for the location of this Convention's Secretariat is being taken, the international community will see the need and necessity to honour Kenya with the opportunity and responsibility of hosting this important secretariat in the spirit already shown in this First Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank most sincerely those member states who encouraged and strongly supported Kenya, and in particular, the African Group and the Group of 77 and China.

Madame President, Kenya like many other developing countries, does not have adequate resources to enable her implement all commitments and other obligations in the Convention. As paragraph 7 of Article 4 on commitments clearly cautions, the extent to which we can implement our commitments depends on how effectively developed country Parties are going to implement their commitments related to financial resources and transfer of technology to developing country Parties. But I wish to emphasize here that this should not be confused with Joint Implementation. The Kenya Government maintains that Joint Implementation should only be carried out between Annex 1 country Parties in the Pilot Phase, with no credits awarded during this Phase. Thereafter, we suggest a review alongside the criteria established by the First Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

Madame President, let me stress that it is the desire of my delegation that participants in this meeting go out of their way to reach consensus on all the issues before it so as to ensure effective implementation of the Convention. Yes, there are uncertainties in some aspects of predicted climate change but it is too risky to wait until these uncertainties are reduced. We should act now, with the developed country Parties taking the lead.

Thank you.