

FINLAND  
FCCC/COP1

6 April 1995

Madame President,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

First, I would like to congratulate you, madame President for your election to chair this important Conference.

It has been a great pleasure for me and for my delegation to participate in this Conference organized in such an excellent manner by the Government of Germany and the City of Berlin. I wish to thank you and all our German hosts for the hospitality we have enjoyed here.

Madame President,

Three years ago in Rio the international community made historic steps in combatting climate change. The Convention on Climate Change provides us with a comprehensive framework to cooperate, in the spirit of partnership, to prevent adverse effects on the Earth's climate.

Here in Berlin we should speed up the implementation of this instrument, start a process to strengthen it further and to ensure that the Convention will institutionally have a strong foundation.

In Rio the developed countries committed themselves to implement policies and measures aiming to stabilize their greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2000 and to protect and enhance the carbon sinks and reservoirs. The main task of this Conference is to make further steps towards reaching our ultimate goal which is to stabilize the concentration of green house gases in the atmosphere.

The reports prepared for the Conference clearly indicate that much remains to be done.

The IPCC reports show that the stabilization of emissions will not lead to the stabilization of green house gas concentrations in the atmosphere. There is a need to do more. We have to adopt more effective policies and take additional measures to reduce the emissions and enhance sinks and reservoirs.

Finland considers that the current commitments in articles 4.2 (a) and (b) of the Convention are just a first step and that they are inadequate. As the next step we should start a process for negotiating a protocol, which contains concrete policies and measures for the time after the year 2000.

Finland fully supports the statement made by France on behalf of the European Union on the main policy issues of the Conference. I would like to concentrate in my statement on the national action of Finland in the implementation of the Convention.

Madame President,

Finland considers that implementation of effective policies and measures is a key to the fulfillment of the commitments.

We have five basic elements in the Finnish carbon dioxide policy.

Firstly, in 1990 Finland became the first country in the world to adopt a carbon dioxide tax, and the system has gradually been improved since then. We would like to have this kind of economic instruments and other measures internationally coordinated as an important element in the future negotiations on a protocol.

Secondly, the Finnish energy conservation programme is aiming at even more efficient end-use of energy in individual sectors. This would reduce consumption of energy by 10 % in the average from the 1990-level by the year 2005.

Thirdly, the aim of new bioenergy programme is to increase use of bioenergy by at least a quarter from the present level by the year 2005. Now some 13 % of energy production in Finland is covered by biomass.

Fourthly, technology programmes have been under way for several years from the 1980's and in 1993 the government launched eight new energy technology development programmes, which focus on new and renewable energy technologies. We believe that solutions which are based on new technologies will have a major role in the future for achieving real emission reductions. Therefore, we support that the OECD/IEA Climate Technology Initiative presented by the Netherlands as an important step forward within this area.

Fifthly, the forestry in Finland is based on sustainable forest management. The growing stock and so also the amount of carbon stored in forests have steadily increased since the 1960's in Finland. This development will continue in future and the carbon reservoirs in forests will clearly grow from the 1990-level. Maintenance of this reservoir is an important part of Finland's climate policy.

Madame President,

These are the main policies we have considered to be the most effective in the Finnish circumstances. We recognise that there are great differences between the parties, their starting points, resources and capabilities. In the future negotiations on protocol we should take these differences fully into account.

Effective climate policy requires a wide range of instruments, tools and measures of which each country or a group of countries could choose as the most suitable for their own circumstances.

Madame President,

Combatting climate change is a long term effort. This Berlin Conference is an important milestone in this long run which - as we hope - will finally safeguard unaffected climate for the future generations.