

Japan

Statement by H. E. Mr. Sohei Miyashita
Head of the Delegation of Japan
Minister of State
Director General of the Environment Agency,
and Minister in Charge of Global Environment
to the First Session of the Conference of the Parties to
the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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Madame President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to congratulate you, Madame President, on your election to the presidency of this historic First Session of the Conference of the Parties. I am confident that, under your skillful chairmanship and able leadership, our discussions at this session will be guided to a successful conclusion.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Her Excellency Dr. Angela Merkel, Federal Minister for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, as well as the Government and People of Germany, City and Citizens of Berlin, for hosting this Conference and for extending warm hospitality.

I also wish to express our deep appreciation to the Interim Secretariat for the Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular, Executive Secretary Mr. Michael Zammit Cutajar, for his excellent work to prepare for this Conference.

Madame President,

Climate Change is one of the most important global problems which could pose a threat to the very foundation of human life on earth. In order to solve this problem, we must take precautionary measures on the basis of latest scientific knowledge. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change forms the basis on which international actions to arrest global warming should be pursued. I believe that this first session of the Conference of the Parties is indeed an important landmark in our efforts to address climate change as it aims to set, by reviewing the measures taken to date, the future course of actions for the international community to take beyond the year 2000.

The developed countries, including Japan, have an important responsibility to take effective policies and measures to combat climate change. They should endeavour to minimize the emissions of greenhouse gases by sources, to enhance greenhouse gas sinks, and to promote global strategies to arrest global warming by creating a framework of international cooperation of which the developing countries are an integral part. The developed countries should make best efforts to fulfill their commitments of the Convention and take the lead in the global efforts to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention.

Madame President,

As a result of combined efforts of both the government and the private sector to promote efficient use of energy, the amount of the Japan's CO₂ emissions remains small in relation to its scale of socio-economic activities. Japan will continue to make every effort to avert global warming, making the best use of its technological and economic capacity.

The Government of Japan formulated the Action Program to Arrest Global Warming in 1990, and is currently implementing

various measures in order to meet its targets. The measures under the Action Program include:

- measures to limit GHGs emissions covering various areas such as urban and regional structures, transport systems, production structure, energy supply structure, and lifestyle; and
- measures to enhance GHGs sinks such as adequate management of domestic forests and greenery in urban areas.

At the Earth Summit in 1992, Japan expressed its firm determination to implement this Action Program. Furthermore, Basic Environment Law was established in 1993 as a comprehensive framework for new environmental policies to address global environmental problems. Based on this Law, the Basic Environment Plan was adopted by the Cabinet last December. The Plan sets the following objectives:

- Japan aims to achieve the ultimate objective of the Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- Japan will make efforts to promote various measures to arrest global warming in cooperation with other countries in a new international framework as well as to the formulation of the new international framework;
- to achieve the above objectives, Japan is determined to attain the goal of its Action Program.

On the basis of this plan and program, Japan intends to stabilize the emissions of CO₂ on a per capita basis in the year 2000 and beyond at about the same level as in 1990. It is also determined to make every effort, by developing innovative technologies and other measures, to stabilize the total amount

of CO2 emissions in the year 2000 and beyond at a level of 1990.

Madame President,

In order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention, it is essential for all Parties to cooperate in adopting measures beyond the year 2000. As the Convention does not have any explicit provision for the period beyond the year 2000, the commitments under the present convention are not adequate to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention. We should therefore agree in this session of the Conference on mandates to negotiate the next step regard to aims or targets and timetables, policies and measures to limit GHGs emissions covering the period beyond 2000. Japan considers a protocol to be the most desirable form of instrument to achieve the objectives. I would like to propose that SBI should initiate the negotiation as soon as possible with the aim to completing it by COP3. Japan would like to contribute to this negotiating process.

Japan also believes that it is crucial for us to start a pilot phase of the joint implementation as soon as possible. Japan intends to acquire experience and knowledge through the implementation of the pilot phase in order to contribute to the formulation of an international scheme to effectively carry out the joint implementation.

Madame President,

Let me mention some of the concrete actions which Japan intends to take in the context of the Convention.

1. The development and enhancement of technologies plays a crucial role in responding to the threat of global warming. Since 1990, Japan is promoting a strategy called "New Earth 21", a dynamic and evolving strategy of international cooperation for the development of innovative technologies. In this context, we strongly support the Climate Technology Initiative which was presented at this Conference by Her Excellency Ms. Margaretha de

Boer of Netherlands. The concept of this Initiative was based on the OECD/IEA Scoping Study which Japan took initiative to launch.

2. The Government is encouraging local initiatives to adopt policies and measures to address climate change.

3. Japan intends to strengthen its support to developing countries. In this regard, Japan and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) organized the Fourth Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change in Bangkok, Thailand, last month.

4. Finally, let me assure you, Madame President, of my fullest cooperation to make this historic Conference as well as its subsequent process a success. It is my pleasure to take this opportunity to announce that the government of Japan is considering to host the third or subsequent session of the Conference of the Parties.

Madame President,

As "global citizens", we all are responsible for global environmental conservation to make sure that our future generations can enjoy the environmentally sound Earth. Our joint efforts to arrest global warming has only begun. As clearly stated in the Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) last year, it is necessary for us to make efforts to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention which is to stabilize the greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere. I wish to reiterate my earnest hope that the Conference will succeed in forging global consensus and that it will prove to be a historic point of departure toward further global actions to cope with climate change. On behalf of my Government and of myself, I wish to reiterate that Japan will make best efforts in this common endeavor.

Thank you very much.