

**STATEMENT BY MRS. ELISSAVET PAPAZOI
DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, PHYSICAL
PLANNING AND PUBLIC WORKS OF GREECE**

United Nations
Framework Convention on Climate Change
First Conference of Parties

Berlin, 6 April 1995

Madame President,
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to extend our appreciation to the host country for the excellent organization and facilities and to congratulate the German Government on the selection of Bonn as the location of the Secretariat of the Climate Convention. I would also like to thank the interim Secretariat of the Convention which has very systematically and successfully contributed to the efforts to realize this First Conference of Parties.

Protecting the climate is our responsibility to the citizens of our countries, to the inhabitants of this planet. A responsibility that stems from the fact that the right to an environment in good state is a human right, closely interlinked and similarly important to the right to freedom and independence, to the right to exist and develop.

Our concerns with respect to climate change are based on scientific considerations provided by the valuable work of IPCC as well as from other scientific bodies. In response to this, we should recognize that we have a unique opportunity to act in a precautionary fashion before our climate experiences an irreversible change.

The global challenge of the future will be to ensure that economic growth, efficient and secure energy supplies and a clean environment are compatible objectives.

Energy projections indicate that energy demand will increase from around 9 billion tons of oil equivalent in 1990, towards 20 billion tons in 2050 under a conventional scenario or towards 13 billion under a high energy efficiency scenario.

In both energy scenarios the projected use of coal will result in considerably increased emissions of greenhouse gases in particular CO₂ leading to - even with the lower level scenario - to a 60% increase of CO₂ emissions in a global scale.

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The projected future energy growth would also create considerable stresses for the security of energy supply. It is simply impossible for the world as a whole to sustain a western level of consumption.

Unless there is a breakthrough in the development of renewable energies such as biomass, photovoltaic, wind, there is no solution to the energy problem of the world, particularly for the developing countries which have the right to develop.

In addition, reliance on imported energy sources, creates trade deficits, draining the financial resources of a country. Real security depends on the capacity of a country to implement a sustainable energy strategy for the long term future, based on a diversity of energy resources - that is an energy mix - with abundant energy quantities of acceptable cost and with no serious environmental and climatic implications, independent from any political pressures.

In view of the growing energy demands in the developing countries and the countries with economies in transition and the dangers associated with a further use of nuclear energies, it is urgently necessary to concentrate our political efforts on renewable energies. Greece produces 100 times more energy from the sun than other of its Mediterranean neighbours, Denmark produces 100 times more energy from the wind than other states of similar wind resources. **Therefore the introduction of renewable energies is a matter of policy, not a matter of capacities and technologies.**

Although Greece contributes less than 0.3% of the global CO₂ emissions it may feel harshly the climatic impacts of the greenhouse effect. Its 16,000 km of coastlines, the over 1,000 islands, and its unique biodiversity may be greatly influenced by a temperature rise or by climatic modifications such as extreme meteorological events of excessive duration or frequency.

Since the greenhouse effect is a global problem with local causes, preventive measures should reflect the globally prevailing conditions, but should also take into consideration the specificities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Greece supports the position of the European Union that this Conference should give a clear mandate for a protocol in the Convention to define commitments, including targets and timetables, of the Annex I parties with a view to progressive limitations and reductions, - individually or jointly - of emissions of greenhouse gases after the year 2000.

Greece also supports the view that developed countries as well as international bodies, such as the European Union, OECD and their Member States, should take the leading role in the international efforts to protect climate. The ratification of the Convention by all Member States in the European Union and all in OECD except one, provides the common basis for joint efforts for climate protection in the short, medium and long run.

In compliance with its responsibilities, Greece has submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention its National Programme to cut projected CO₂ emissions for the year 2000 by as much as 10%. Instead of increasing our CO₂ emissions by 25% by the year 2000 - in the framework of the decision of the European Union to stabilize CO₂ emissions in the European Union as a whole - we have taken a series of measures - such as the promotion of renewable energies and natural gas and the implementation of the National energy efficiency programme - to reduce this number to 15%. And we are positive that in the following years this percent will be even lower.

With respect to Annex II parties Greece believes that their commitments should be looked upon in a careful manner and in conjunction with the common but differentiated responsibilities and the right to develop in a sustainable manner.

To this end, Greece is contributing to GEF with an amount of 5.5 million dollars in an effort to support developing countries to develop in a sustainable manner, to face their environmental problems without any disruption in their development efforts and to enhance partnerships towards our common target to safeguard the environment.

Madame President,
Distinguished delegates,

the gathering in Berlin of 184 states and over a hundred NGOs demonstrates the common feeling that joint efforts are needed to address the climatic problem. These efforts may only be successful if we accept our individual and joint responsibilities and realize that the critical threshold for an irreversible change in our planet's climate is closer than ever.

To this end, let the 21st century be the Renewable energy era.

Thank you.