

FINAL
STATEMENT
BY
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ENVIRONMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
TO
THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE
(COP15)

Madam President,

On behalf of the Ugandan Delegation, I wish to express our most sincere gratitude to the Royal Danish Government and the people of Demark for the warm hospitality extended to my delegation since our arrival. I also extend our gratitude to the Mayor of Copenhagen for the excellent arrangements and facilities that have been put at our disposal to make our work possible despite the chilly temperatures.

Also allow me to join my colleagues in congratulating you on your election to the Presidency of COP15. By that election, you have been entrusted with the great responsibility of guiding our deliberations on matters of great importance and concern to the global community especially those in the developing countries that undoubtedly are already bearing the brunt of climate change impacts and whose future survival and development will depend on the decisions that we shall take here. We remain under your trusted and able leadership to be guided on how to achieve the best for our people and the future generation.

Madam President,

The inconvenient truth is that climate change is for **"real"** and happening much faster than we ever thought. Since the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report, new science tells us that the impacts on planet earth, people and nature are far more severe than even the findings of that report. The science also tells us that to delay significant action by even 5 to 10 years will undermine our ability to

stay well below 2 degrees Centigrade and severely undermines the effectiveness of long-term adaptation actions. Furthermore, addressing climate change in an inadequate or unfair manner will compound the challenges to poor and vulnerable communities. It is therefore true that humanity is facing a profound emergency that needs a decisive action now and here. Copenhagen is therefore a historic moment that provides a unique opportunity for that decisive action.

We must therefore pool our political resources to make **a major substantive effort** that will result in a positive change to guarantee our survival and that of the future generation. Anything less than that will only draw us closer to a global climate catastrophe. The time to act is now. Not tomorrow. I want to believe that all of us who are gathered here have done so because we have the political will for action on climate change. So let the world see our action here in Copenhagen.

Madam President,

Our historic journey to Copenhagen started with the adoption of the Montreal Action Plan (2005) and the Bali Action Plan (2007) which respectively created the mandates for the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Kyoto Protocol and Long-term Cooperative Action on Climate Change. Since then, our technical officials have invested their best efforts to pave the way to Copenhagen. They have also encountered numerous obstacles in their efforts to generate consensus. The good news, however, is that through their discussions, we on the political side now understand better each other's concerns. We now hope that this understanding will lead to more common positions on the critical issues.

Madam President,

Let me now turn to specific issues of concern to my own country and region. We have come to Copenhagen full of determination to find solutions to yet another one of Africa's most challenging and pressing problems. Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate

change and climate variability with huge economic impact and this vulnerability is exacerbated by existing developmental challenges. African and other developing countries are already losing billions of dollars due to climate change. Further global warming threatens:

- Reductions in crop yields in some countries of as much as 50% by 2020;
- Increased water stress for 75-250 million people by 2020 and 350-600 million by 2050; For instance, a study on climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy recently completed by my country with support from the Royal Danish Government, has identified key vulnerability areas including water for production; management of transboundary water resources; and capacity for data collection, analysis, storage and dissemination.
- Cost of adaptation to sea-level rise of at least 5-10% of GDP.

These are just a few examples to demonstrate the magnitude of the challenges we are facing. **This is why the LDCs and SIDS are calling for the limiting of global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Centigrade simply to stay alive.** More than 1.5 degrees centigrade of warming will be catastrophic for these groups of countries. In addition, the costs in economic and human terms will become progressively high.

Uganda is one of the countries in Africa that are already trying to cope with the impacts of climate change in the region. Seasonal variations in rainfall are affecting agriculture in many ways. Drought and floods are having adverse effects on the economy and the population of Uganda reminding us that action to address climate change is a global priority. This is the reason we have come to Copenhagen to join the global effort in **finding a long-term solution which must adequately reflect the right to sustainable development and also the principles of historical responsibility and common but differentiated responsibility and capabilities** that are enshrined in the Convention. Mindful of these principles, all countries must play a part in the global effort with the leadership from developed countries while economic and

social development and poverty eradication remain legitimate priorities of developing countries.

Technology development and transfer is of critical importance in tackling climate change in developing countries. When widely disseminated and used it can play a key role in adaptation and mitigation. This, however, will require:

- Massive production and extensive dissemination of existing technologies, similar to the scale of the information communication technology; and
- Accelerate further improvements or development, production and dissemination of existing technologies.

Indeed, such actions cannot be achieved without the cooperation of all key actors including governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, and the civil society. We must learn from the digital technology revolution and what it offers in solving this insurmountable problem.

There is need for a set of technology objectives that are ambitious enough to deliver on the physical emission path needed, as well as adaptation needs, and that can guide the global UNFCCC technology mechanism and national and international development towards low carbon and climate resilient economies.

Equally necessary is a comprehensive framework for adaptation that will massively scale up support for immediate to long-term adaptation actions in developing countries, including capacity building, planning and implementation of specific projects. **We must (Uganda is prepared) also set goals to halt the destruction of natural forests and reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation to zero by 2020, through an international REDD-plus mechanism.** Equally critically important is to ensure sustainable management and wise use of wetland resources.

Madam President,

I would also like to underscore the importance of mitigation actions in addressing climate change. We do recognize the existence of different development activities and levels of development in our countries, and also the linkage between these and emission of greenhouse gases. It is partly against this background that the Kyoto Protocol was negotiated and adopted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by developed countries. While the protocol has succeeded in some areas in reducing GreenHouse Gas emissions, much more emission reductions are required if we are to avoid reaching the tipping point of climate change beyond which the planet earth with all its inhabitants will be doomed to destruction. **In order to achieve the objective of staying within safe temperature limits, we call upon developed countries to exercise leadership and quickly adopt an aggregate reduction target of no less than 45% below 1990 levels by 2020. National targets must then be derived from this aggregate target.**

We prominently note that developed countries have a dual quantified obligation to reduce emissions at home and support developing countries with resources for adaptation and in their efforts to substantially deviate from business as usual emissions growth.

Before concluding, I wish to underscore the need for **increased, predictable and sustainable financing from the developed to the developing counties** to enable full implementation of the above measures. To this end, **Uganda calls for an increase of funds in the Least Developing Countries Fund(LDCF) under the GEF to about US\$1.5billion** to support implementation of Climate Change Adaptation programmes of LDCs.

I thank you Madam President and Distinguished Delegates for listening to me.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY