



**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
KINGDOM OF LESOTHO THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHLABI
TSEKOA AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE 15TH
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE,**

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

17 DECEMBER, 2009.

Mr. President,

From the outset, I would like to thank the government of Denmark for the courtesies that have been extended to us and for the elaborate arrangements that have been made for our meeting. I would also like to congratulate you, Mr. President, upon your election to the high office of this 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Mr. President,

It is now 15 years since the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and 12 years since the Kyoto Protocol. We are meeting here to review our commitment to the objectives that we set for ourselves under this Convention.

COP 15 marks the culmination of the negotiations launched 24 months ago through the Bali roadmap that we all agreed to. The Bali Roadmap is, without doubt, of great significance to our quest to address the compelling challenges of climate change that we face today.

Mr. President,

Lesotho aligns herself with the views expressed by the chair of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), on how we should define our road map from now on to the period beyond 2012.

It is alarming to note that as we become more aware of the intrinsic need to combat climate change, our actions are not commensurate with the essential level of commitment to the objectives agreed under this Convention. We know the route that we must follow to combat climate change. That route is the reduction of the greenhouse gases emissions. But we seem reluctant to live up to our responsibilities.

The reports of the IPCC bear testimony to the continuing deterioration of climatic conditions that are essential for the very survival of humanity on this planet. It is imperative, therefore, that the outcome of COP15 should be a beacon that defines the future of the planet that we shall bequeath to posterity.

Mr. President,

All countries are affected by climate change in various ways. Lesotho's Initial Communication under the UNFCCC as well as the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) emphasize Lesotho's extreme vulnerability to climate change. These and other related documents identify land degradation, desertification, food insecurity and the gradual decline of the land carrying capacity as the most serious climate change related problem. Lesotho being landlocked, mountainous and having fragile ecosystems is identified under Article 4.8 of the Convention to have special needs and concerns.

In the past five years, Lesotho's infrastructure worth at least USD30 million has been lost through floods, strong winds and tornadoes. In the past 10 years

food production per capita has been reduced from 112 to 83 tons; contribution of agriculture to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined from 4 to 2%; biomass energy resources have declined and our people have had to go further afield to collect firewood which is a requisite source of household energy and cooking; water resources have generally declined per capita as a result of climate change.

Despite the meager financial resources and competing socio-economic needs, Lesotho has made a commitment to address the imperatives brought about by climate change:

- We have planted over nine million trees between 2003 and 2009;
- Under the National Electrification Masterplan, whose target is to have 35% of households connected to electricity by 2015, 13% of households have been connected to date; The achievement of this plan needs USD0.4 billion which we don't have.

Adaptation to climate change is indeed most urgent to us in Lesotho. It should have been addressed yesterday.

Mr. President,

Lesotho would like to reiterate her position on the following important issues:

- (i) The provision of financial, technological and capacity building support by developed country Parties for adaptation in developing countries is a commitment under the Convention that must be urgently fulfilled. Climate change places additional burden on the developing countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals in particular.
- (ii) The Convention recognizes the special needs of the Least Developed Countries. It is through the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund that the least developed and the developing countries can best be assisted. These funds must, therefore, be maintained and strengthened
- (iii) The Copenhagen outcome must provide new, additional, sustainable, accessible and predictable finance to support a comprehensive international programme on adaptation, that reduces vulnerability and increases resilience to impacts that are already occurring, and impacts that are likely to occur in the future.
- (iv) It is imperative that the Kyoto Protocol is maintained and effectively implemented.
- (v) The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must continue to be upheld in the post-2012 regime on the combat of climate change.
- (vi) CPO 15 must result in fair and effective conclusions that will benefit the climate and vulnerable countries. These conclusions must take into account

the overriding priority of poverty eradication, sustainable development and the need to consolidate gender equity in all our societies.

The enormity of the challenge of our time is crystal clear. It is up to us here in Copenhagen to seal a decent and robust deal that will save our planet and humanity.

I thank you for your attention.



**Statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of
Lesotho the Right Honourable Mr. Pakalitha Mosisili
at the Fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties
(COP 15) and the fifth session
of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting
of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 5)
Copenhagen, Denmark**

16 December 2009

On behalf of the Least Developed Countries

Your Excellency Prime Minister of Denmark

Your Excellency President of COP15

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Honourable Ministers

Your Excellency Secretary General of the United Nations

The Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a singular honour and privilege for me to address the 15th Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC and the 5th Conference of Parties for the Kyoto Protocol as Head of Delegation for the Kingdom of Lesotho, and on behalf of the Least Developed Countries Group.

I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, upon your election to lead the UNFCCC process during the critical next twelve months.

We gather here today, Mr. President, in the backdrop of unprecedented *adverse impacts of climate change* on our planet. For the LDCs, these impacts are both massive and devastating. Their

most frightening hallmark is the decline in agricultural production and frequent outbreaks of new diseases, not to mention the threat to the very existence of some low lying coastal plains and some Small Island Developing States. The situation is no better for those countries, like Lesotho, which have fragile mountain ecosystems that have to cope with severe land degradation, declining land-carrying capacity, and biodiversity loss. We look to the future with great apprehension.

Mr. President,

Climate change affects all of us on the globe. But what distinguishes the LDC Group is our very limited capacity to adapt to this emerging situation. Through increasingly painful experience, the LDC Group realizes that Climate Change is not compatible with sustainable development.

Both the World Meteorological Organisation and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, continue to indicate the imperatives that the global community cannot ignore if we are to bequeath to future generations a planet capable of sustaining life.

We therefore, have to develop at this historic COP, a regime based on objective scientific analysis, to address the challenges of climate change. Decisions that will be taken at this COP are likely to be the most defining for the future of life on this planet, immediately and in the long term.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

COP15 and CMP5 meet here in Copenhagen to consider the report of the two track process of negotiations that commenced in Bali two years ago. One track is expected to come up with a new Green House Gases reduction regime which is to come into effect after the end of the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol in 2012. This track therefore addresses a fundamental issue, namely, the cause of climate change.

The LDCs support the objective and spirit of the Kyoto Protocol which commits developed countries to reduce Green House Gases by 5% compared to 1990 levels by the year 2012. LDCs are in favour of implementation of Article 3.9 of the Kyoto Protocol which called for

the review of further commitments of developed country Parties under the Protocol in the subsequent commitment period. Future commitments by developed countries should include their obligations to reduce their Green House Gases emission from 1990 levels by at least 45% by 2020 and by at least 95% by 2050. The world must limit global temperature increase to the maximum of 1.5°C and Green House Gases concentration to below 350 parts per million to avoid an irreversible climate system. Therefore, as LDCs, we are against any replacement of the Kyoto Protocol or its merger with any new Agreement.

Mr. President,

The second track of negotiations is of extreme importance to us as it addresses the issue of enhancing action on key building blocks of the Convention, namely mitigation, adaptation, shared vision, technology transfer, capacity building and finance.

While the developed countries have, through the Kyoto Protocol, the responsibility to take well defined measures with clear Green House Gases reduction targets, the Convention nevertheless dictates that

mitigation is a responsibility of all of us under the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility”. The LDCs remain loyal to this principle. We therefore recommend promotion of mitigation actions in the developing countries which will be encouraged and supported financially by the developed countries.

The Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperation Action also decided on enhanced action on adaptation. This decision is very dear to the LDCs because indeed adaptation is a matter of life and death to the LDCs. We take note of some progress on the implementation of some adaptation activities. 43 of the 49 LDCs, have submitted their National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs). Three of these are now implementing a NAPA project. We are hopeful NAPAs will be an integral part and building block for medium and long-term adaptation in LDCs. The overall cost of implementing NAPAs is estimated at USD2 billion. I take this opportunity to thank those countries that have supported the implementation of NAPAs but appeal for more contributions as the shortfall stands at USD 1.8 billion after the USD 200 million currently in the LDC Fund.

Mr. President,

The LDCs would like to see developed countries fulfill their commitments under the Convention to support implementation of adaptation through provision of finance, technology and capacity building to the LDCs. The Copenhagen outcome must ensure significant scaling up of funds. These funds must be new and additional to the ODA arrangements. They must also be accessible, predictable and sustainable in order to support urgent and long-term adaptation programmes that reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to climate change impacts. Most importantly, the new financial architecture to be decided at this COP must take into consideration and build on the already existing models such as the LDC Fund, in order to address the specific needs and special situations of LDCs.

Mr. President,

We inherited this planet from our ancestors. I believe that with sufficient political will, we can rise up to our responsibility to save it for future generations.

I thank you.