

Check against delivery

Statement by Yoriko Kawaguchi
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November 21, 2000
COP6, The Hague

H.E. President Pronk,
H.E. Prime Minister Kok,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Mr. President,

Three years ago, we assembled in Kyoto and managed to conclude the international agreement with quantified targets of greenhouse gas reductions through extremely difficult negotiations. It is no exaggeration to say that we are now standing at the crossroads. Whether we can inspire the spirit into the Kyoto Protocol or not really depends upon the outcome of negotiations over the next few days. We have to use our wisdom, constructive compromise to take political decisions in order to make COP6 a success and the Kyoto Protocol ratifiable and to realize its entry into force by 2002, the year of Rio+10. Japan attaches great importance to environmental integrity, and such integrity should be achieved according as the Protocol becomes operationalized.

First, I would like to point out that the group of issues concerning developing countries is one of the most important that we have to reach agreement here. Technology transfer and capacity building should be strengthened in order to assist developing countries in implementing their common but differentiated responsibilities. Adaptation measures against adverse effects of climate change and the impact of the implementation of response measures should be also addressed in an appropriate manner.

Japan recognizes those issues as extremely important. Hence we have been positively undertaking international cooperation with developing countries. This is because we believe the global tackling of climate change to be an absolute necessity from the long-term perspective.

At COP6, heated discussion on developing country issues are expected on such elements as (1) governance, (2) uses, (3) administration, (4) implementation as well as on (5) scale. These items have to be addressed step by step. Japan will participate actively in the discussion.

Specifically, I would like to draw your attention to the "Kyoto Initiative", a comprehensive package to support developing countries in the field of climate change, which was announced at COP3. This Initiative includes capacity building, financial cooperation on the most concessional terms and the transfer of Japan's technologies and know-how. We have so far provided technical training to 2,800 persons in capacity building and extended 4.8 billion US dollars financial assistance over the two years since 1998. In the meantime, we have also been promoting policy dialogue with our neighboring countries through such occasions as the Environment Congress in Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA), while constructing information networks on climate change and holding various kinds of seminars in the region.

I am pleased to state that the Government of Japan will continue to support developing countries in the field of climate change, and continue to strengthen its assistance in adaptation measures, in particular to cope with adverse effects, on developing countries.

Mr. President,

We have to reach agreement here, in The Hague, on the rules on the Kyoto mechanisms, sinks and compliance. In order to achieve the goals of the Kyoto Protocol, it is necessary to make emission reduction efforts over the long-term, and to build a framework that would encourage all stakeholders to join those efforts. Full utilization of market mechanisms and implementation of economically efficient measures would ensure, as a consequence, maximum environmental integrity. The Kyoto mechanisms must be designed from such a perspective.

We should make our best efforts to mobilize the widest possible range of resources including ODA, and ensure the benefits to be shared as widely as possible. The use of ODA is particularly instrumental in ensuring equitable distribution of CDM. With respect to the composition of a quantified ceiling, we have to avoid reopening the conclusion which was reached after extremely tough negotiations in Kyoto. It is not a good approach to overrule the judgement of developing countries on sustainable development by limiting the types of eligible CDM projects.

Sinks are very important to us. Japan regards environmental integrity as a priority. It is essential not to lose incentives for appropriate sinks activities, recognizing that sinks activities contribute to removal of CO₂.

On compliance, Japan believes that we should develop an enforceable system which enables Parties to facilitate compliance and avoid non-compliance. The compliance argument should not delay the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol.

Mr. President,

Japan's energy efficiency is the world highest. In fact, what Japan has committed at Kyoto is a reduction of more than 20%, based upon the estimate of greenhouse gas emissions increase from 1990 level under the business as usual (BaU) scenario. We are determined to make every effort, recognizing that it is our responsibility to pass on future generations a world free from global warming.

On the domestic front, Japan enacted the Climate Change Law in April 1999, which was the first of this kind in the world. In addition, Japan amended the Law on Energy Savings and has been encouraging the use of non-fossil energy resources including renewables.

I would like to confirm that Japan is going to use domestic actions to cover a significant portion of the reduction necessary to attain the Kyoto target. We regard the use of the Kyoto mechanism and sinks as an important complement to such past and ongoing domestic efforts of ours. Hence, appropriate rule-making on them at COP6 is a ratification matter.

Mr. President,

Japanese people have special attachment to the Kyoto Protocol. We have to get the Protocol into force, as an important first step in our long-term endeavors to continue over tens and hundreds of years.

Each country has its own political, economic and social circumstances. Given this, what is required of all the Parties to make progress toward their common goal is the spirit of "brave compromise". It is time to take action.

Thank you for your attention.