

**STATEMENT BY
THE HONORABLE
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**TO THE THIRD CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE,
KYOTO, JAPAN
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It would be really a tragic misunderstanding of the Kyoto spirit if it were to be viewed from a conflictual or mutually exclusive standpoint between Parties. No stakeholder should feel unconcerned about the major changes which are now affecting climate worldwide. Because the warnings of environmentalists and climatologists have been dismissed for too long, we have today reached an unprecedented alarming situation. The subject at issue in Kyoto is so all-embracing of human civilization that we are duty-bound to agree on a protocol which will give a new lease of life to Planet Earth. Effective partnership is consequently the key concept which must emerge from this Conference. No one should take the heavy responsibility of having contributed to kill the Kyoto spirit. This would amount to cold-blooded killing of vulnerable states (more particularly small islands) in the first place and mass suicide in the second one (the developed countries). Nobody can escape the backlash of a battered environment.

Mr. Chairman,

The greatness of this Conference is that we are all here convinced that the Green House gases, if left unchecked, will impair irreversibly the future of the human race. We need no theories or academic demonstrations to understand that climate change has now become a time bomb. Eco-catastrophe is already there. The international scientific community has unfortunately preached in the wilderness for so long. We must now realize that what was once decried as science-fiction or environment extremism has been overtaken by grim realities.

The question which must now be asked is whether, despite our knowledge of the state of the Earth today, we are still hesitant to act boldly and swiftly. This unprecedented challenge calls for exceptional measures. Harmonizing industrial development with ecosystems and human dimensions calls for courage and convictions since it involves revisiting the very foundation of today's mode of production. We know that transition periods are difficult to assume but there is absolutely no alternative to this. Kyoto must be turning-point leading to a new industrial revolution based on environmentally sound technology. We must all cooperate to change today's trend, otherwise man-provoked climate change will disturb profoundly our life pattern.

Through under the Convention, we , as non-Annex I countries, have no emission control targets, yet we should not be considered as passive spectators, In my country for example, we are introducing the ISO 14000 standards, we are making regulations to make waste audits and environment management systems applicable to industries, we are at this very moment hosting two international seminars on toxic waste and Green Productivity Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

We have been theorizing about the concept of global village for some time now but climate disturbances have not waited for man-made regulations to go global. Climate changes know no boundaries and need no special entry permit. They affect the world differently but nonetheless dangerously. This situation obviously calls for international solidarity. Our mission in Kyoto is precisely to engineer a mechanism for survival.

If in the name of glorified principles of respect for human lives, nations enter into coalitions to dismantle biological warfare laboratories which produce deadly gases, on similar standards we should, in Kyoto, realize that we have already gone beyond acceptable thresholds as regards emission of Green House Gases. These too are lethal. Climatologists predict that even a successful Protocol in Kyoto will unfortunately not prevent carbon dioxide from doubling by the middle of the next century. This is a forceful argument, driving home that we have no time to loose. We are already late on schedule. There are sufficient news items to show that it is not only small, developing nations which are vulnerable. Health hazards, cataclysms and economic threats are already hitting prosperous nations. El Nino is fast becoming a fifth season. Mr. Chairman, facts speak louder than theories and should therefore be more convincing. This is why there should be basically no compromise in the determination of one and all to ensure that emissions of Green House Gases are reduced. We must leave Kyoto in a win-win situation. In practical terms, we expect developed nations to take legal, political and binding commitments to reduce emissions of Green House Gases within a reasonable time frame and at a

rate which is scientifically acceptable . We also expect that a policy for transfer technology to be adopted so as to allow developing nations to get prepared to face future challenges without damaging the environment.

Mr. Chairman,

The challenge here in Kyoto is to reshape the history of mankind, to give to the children of our children a planet where man-made climate changes would be known only through history textbooks.

I once saw a poster showing a child trapped inside a battered Planet Earth. The child was crying and almost imploring: "Stop this Earth, I want to get out".

Distinguished delegates, there is absolutely no exit with the existing situation except for corpses. We want to live and be committed to healthy living and sustainable progress.

The Kyoto Conference is a test of solidarity. If we really believe, as we do, that this concept has the power and the drive that it should convey, then let us as the English poet, John Milton, start writing after Paradise Lost, the next sequence, that is Paradise Regained. We can and we will do it.

We are all conscious of the historic challenge which we have to face almost immediately. The world is expecting from us a 'No retreat, no surrender' attitude.
