

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

INPUT INTO COP 10 HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT

**“The Convention After Ten Years: Accomplishments
and Future Challenges”**

By

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ADDRESS

**Mr. President of COP 10
The Chair of this Distinguished Panel
Representatives of Parties
Ladies and Gentlemen**

All Protocols Observed:

It is with great pleasure and honour that I have accepted the opportunity to address this very important event. We gather here today to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the coming into force of this Convention. As we celebrate it is indeed useful that we as Parties look back on our accomplishments of the ten years of the Convention and the future challenges. I however put it to you my fellow Ministers and other heads of delegations that we must also examine those things which we have not accomplished and ask ourselves why. It is only after that self-examination that we can truly plan how we will effectively face the future challenges.

Madam Chair:

The arid environment, recurrent drought and desertification have contributed to making my country, Namibia, one of the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change. We are a natural resource based economy and we have limited technical and financial resources to adapt to the effects of climate change. Our economy is very dependent on our agricultural production. We need to prepare ourselves to deal with and adapt to the effects of climate change, a problem we did not create or contributed to.

In 1992, we presented our Green Plan to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in the neighbouring country of Brazil, stating all that I have said above and more. Namibia acceded to the Convention in 1995 and this has placed a number of legal obligations on our country as well as on all other Parties to the Convention.

According to our Initial National Communication (INC) report, Namibia is considered a minor producer of greenhouse gases. We will nevertheless be affected by the global production of these gases with respect to our climate in the future. The INC also concluded that we are highly vulnerable to climate change. Our national interest therefore dictate that we place more emphasis on our vulnerability to the effects of climate change and the necessary adaptation actions we need to take to prevent and reduce such effects. Although our focus and emphasis is on vulnerability and adaptation, we are nevertheless prepared to take mitigative actions as well to address climate change.

To the best of my knowledge, the Convention is legally binding on all Parties, both Annex I and Non-Annex 1. The Group of 77 and China, of which Namibia is a part, have fulfilled their legal obligations to the Convention. They have prepared and submitted in most cases their Initial National Communications, they have taken steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and have conducted numerous assessments and studies in order to enable and prepare them to adapt to climate change during the first ten years of the Convention. These efforts were undertaken with assistance from the Convention process and we are grateful for and acknowledge such assistance.

The Kyoto Protocol will come into force early next year thanks to the efforts of the Parties. I wish to express our gratitude to all the Parties that have acceded to the Protocol and call on those who have not done so to take step to complete ratification.

As a group, the Non-Annex 1 countries, have however made little progress on implementing those policies and measures that will enable them to adapt to climate change. Our governments have invested significant amounts of time, human, financial and other resources in the Convention and its processes far beyond what was intended in the letter and spirit of the Convention.

Madam Chair, Article 4 of the Convention requires that Annex 1 Parties provide the financial, technical and other resources to Non-Annex 1 Parties to enable them to adapt to climate

change. Ten years on and this legal obligation have not been fulfilled. We come to the meetings each year with hope that next year things will be in place but we are disappointed once again.

At COP 7 in Marrakech, we agreed to set up the Special Climate Change Fund and there was much fanfare associated with this agreement. Now that the fund is about to become operational, we find that the amount pledged is quite limited and it comes with severe restrictions, including steep incremental costs. Most developing countries will not be able to meet those conditions and might be denied access to the fund. This COP would be positively remembered in our history if we took concrete steps to remove and reduce the conditions attached to this fund and increase the level of pledges and commitments. The best celebration of our ten-year anniversary would be for us to leave Buenos Aires confident that the required legal and other obligations of Annex 1 Parties to assist Non-Annex 1 Parties under our Convention would be fulfilled before we get to COP 11.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion let me say that the Non-Annex 1 Parties to this Convention are not beggars. We in good faith with our Annex 1 Partners negotiated and agreed to the provisions of this Convention. Parties voluntarily agreed to become part of the process. In so doing they are required to be bound by its legal and other provisions.

Climate change is a global occurrence and does not have any political or geographic boundaries. International law and natural justice demands and requires that the developed country Parties fulfill their legal obligations without political or geographic discrimination.

I thank you.

Hon. Petrus lilonga, M.P.
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