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Greece

**5th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate Change,
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Statement submitted by

HE Theodore Koliopanos

Deputy Minister for the Environment

**Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical
Planning & Public Work**

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Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first convey my Government's thanks to the German Government and the city of Bonn for their excellent hospitality during this Conference.

The great concern about the future of our planet, as it has become evident that human activity is affecting the earth's climate in an adverse way, remains as valid today as it did two years ago in Kyoto. The telltale signs, such as high temperatures and extreme weather events, if anything are increasing with each passing day. The importance and necessity of the historic task to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases that we all undertook in Kyoto remains undiminished. And the plan that we agreed in Buenos Aires for constructing the mechanisms that will assist us in meeting our targets is still applicable. What is needed now is the energy, good will, and perseverance to address and solve in a widely acceptable fashion all the diverse problems and concerns that arise on the way.

We are now at a stage after the inaugural fireworks have been fired, at a stage where progress is vital but the work is technical, demanding but unglamorous. It is a stage where the issues do not lend themselves to easy explanations and press conference. And for these reasons, it is a stage that requires a larger, stronger effort from the political leadership to both sustain the strong support of the public for this process and to guide and push those who toil in crafting the tools, including the necessary agreements, to reach the Kyoto targets.

The progress made so far in resolving issues regarding the new flexible mechanisms of the Protocol is important. But it is imperative that this work continue at a fast enough pace so as to be in a position to reach a decision by the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties. This decision cannot include eligibility of nuclear energy and other non-sustainable activities.

The issues of domestic effort, and the engagement of the developing countries, albeit at a later stage and with the appropriate assistance, need to be further elaborated and advanced together to an early resolution to the satisfaction of all parties with a view to ratification.

Simultaneously, we cannot ignore our commitments stemming from the Convention. We should indeed continue to find ways to advance capacity building and the transfer of environmentally sound technology so that new, needed development can follow a sustainable path with due respect to the local and global environment and to future generations.

Greece, in accordance with its obligations under the Convention as well as the ones that stem from the early action requirement of the Protocol, has been working to constrain greenhouse gas emissions. It has recently advanced plans to increase substantially the availability of natural gas in its energy mix by building a pipeline connection to Italy. It has put into place the necessary directives to streamline the procedures for renewable energy penetration. And it is in the process of finalizing its new comprehensive national plan to reduce, through domestic actions, its expected emissions by almost 25 million TOE of CO₂ by the end of the first commitment period.

Despite recent regional difficulties, Greece is striving to develop energy networks, collaborations and interconnections with its neighbors in the Balkans, the Black Sea and the eastern Mediterranean to improve the efficiency of energy use and to increase the security of supply and the environment. In addition, in an effort to contribute to exchange of information and know-how, it is supporting joint research with neighboring countries in the areas of renewable resource assessment and technology, rational use of energy and energy planning, and plans to continue in the future.

Greece, a country of light and sea, remains deeply committed to the Kyoto process. It looks forward to substantial progress here in Bonn and in the next subsidiary body meetings so that in the Hague we can finalize agreements aiming for early ratification and entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol

Thank you for your kind attention.