

**Statement by**

**Honourable R.A. Bhagwan**

**Minister of Environment**

**Republic of Mauritius**

**United Nations Framework Convention**

**on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

**COP 6**

**The Hague, Netherlands**

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Mr. President,

Excellencies Ministers,

Heads of Delegations,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

More than eight years after the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and three years after the existence of its executive arm, the Kyoto Protocol, emission of greenhouse gases continues to increase and the trends remain unchecked in many industrialized countries. This is also in spite of the alarming occurrence of extreme weather events all over the world, and regardless of the threat to the very existence of some countries and their populations .

Mr. President, I concede that the issue of climate change is a complex scientific, social, legal, economical and political one. But this should not be an excuse to delay actions on pledges already made.

Mr. President, in Mauritius, we are very much conscious of the consequences of global warming. As an Island State, we are at greater ecological and economical risks associated with adverse effects of climate change. We cannot over emphasise what Mauritius stands to lose if climate change problems are not addressed adequately and in a timely manner. The threat to agriculture, tourism and fisheries, three of the main pillars of our economy, cannot be overestimated. This is the reason why Mauritius has been the first country to ratify the Convention and has recently acceded to its Kyoto Protocol.

Mr. President, Mauritius has fulfilled its initial obligation by submitting its National Communication and the preparation of a National Action Plan. Furthermore, Mauritius is implementing tangible emission reduction programs. Over 30% of our total energy comes from renewable sources, namely, hydro and biomass. Other sources are being identified and projects are in the pipeline for implementation if financial support becomes available. We are also enforcing legislation to minimise emission from the transport sector which accounts for 34% of total emission.

Mr. President, this contribution by Mauritius may be perceived differently by Parties, but the illuminated will be inspired to assume the same sense of responsibility, commitments and concern for the future generation. They would give up their egoistic attachment to present economic gains. They would set aside the "après-moi le deluge attitude", both in the figurative and the literal sense.

They would take the necessary steps to halt further degradation of our common atmosphere. They would ensure that they are the first to remedy the harm they have already caused, particularly to the most vulnerable countries of the globe.

Mr. President, our delegations have been negotiating earnestly during the whole of the last week. It is disappointing to note that the most critical issues are still on the negotiation table. We are far from the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, which is of our own making. But we have to succeed. And success of COP 6 will be measured by our ability to come to terms with open heart and mind on these issues.

As President Chirac rightly said “ le temps est a l'action”.

Action is indeed required now for:

1. An honest effort for the development and implementation of concrete capacity building programmes in the developing countries, taking into account the special needs of small island states and least developed countries;
2. A decision that would serve as a framework for smooth implementation of obligations on technology transfer as formulated in the Convention;
3. A prompt start for the Clean Development Mechanism with appropriate rules and procedures to ensure that it promotes sustainable development in developing countries;
4. Assurance that predictable and supplementary sources of funding are available through levies and otherwise, to assist in adaptation to climate impacts.

Finally, Mr. President, the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol provide all of us with excellent opportunities to redress the prevailing situation and leave a better place for future generations to live. Our children are watching us. Hundreds of them are here to watch us even more closely, but essentially to show us how concerned they are about their future. Let us not disappoint them. Mauritius therefore makes a strong appeal to all Parties, who have not yet signed the Kyoto Protocol, to do so at their earliest and let us, altogether, start the uphill task of cleaning our planet EARTH.

Thank you, Mr. President.