



**Statement**

**by**

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**India**

**at the**

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**to the**

**UN Framework Convention on Climate Change**

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Mr. President, Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

1. On behalf of the people of India I extend greetings to the citizens of this historic city, Kyoto, and to the people of Japan. To the Government of Japan, I convey my country's sincere appreciation for hosting the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The world, poised at the threshold of a new century, looks to this Conference with expectation and hope.
2. Mr. President: On behalf of the delegation of India, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the helm of the Conference. Your guidance and patience has made our task much easier. I would like to take this opportunity of reiterating that in your endeavours you will continue to have our wholehearted support. My delegation also acknowledges the unrelenting labour put in by Ambassador Estrada and the support provided by Executive Secretary Cutajar in the negotiations.
3. Mr. President: We are all seeking a positive outcome at Kyoto within the principles of the Convention on Climate Change and the Berlin Mandate. Essentially, the Conference is addressing two issues in the new legal instrument for the period beyond the year 2000. Firstly, and principally, the commitments of developed countries are to be strengthened adequately for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Secondly, the capacities of developing countries have to be enhanced through transfer of financial resources and technology from developed countries for advancing the implementation of existing commitments.
4. At the same time, there is much concern that developed countries have fallen so short of meeting their existing commitments. Very few have taken requisite policies and measures for returning to 1990 emission levels. The commitments made with respect to transfer of financial resources, too, have not taken off in any meaningful manner. The Convention provisions relating to transfer of technologies are yet to be operationalised.
5. Mr. President: While the Convention recognises that the largest share of historical and current global emissions has originated in developed countries, it is also clear that developing countries will bear the brunt of the adverse impacts. Very vulnerable are the agricultural households. 70 % of India's population derive their livelihood from agriculture related activities, much of

which is at subsistence levels. But nevertheless, the Indian farmer has made our nation self-sufficient in food. This is a significant achievement which cannot be endangered. We are also concerned about the effects of sea level rise on the lifestyles of the coastal communities in India. Adaptation strategies have to be crafted after careful impact studies.

6. Mr. President: In recent times, questions have been posed about the response of developing countries to the Convention. We will be drawing up our national communications in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. We regard this as a significant enabling activity to advance sustainable development. At the same time, ambitious national programmes are under implementation for energy conservation and increasing production efficiency, cleaner fuels, renewable energy technologies, afforestation and wasteland development. Our initiatives for generating electricity through solar and wind power and small hydro projects have been much acclaimed. The national effort towards sustainable development is supported by a comprehensive statutory framework, a vigilant media with complete freedom of expression, watchful NGOs, and a judicial system which has recognized the citizen's right to a clean environment as a component of the right to life and liberty.

7. To return to our work at the Conference. We expect the new instrument to have significant targets and timetables for developed countries to modify longer term trends in anthropogenic emissions consistent with the objectives of the Convention. Simultaneously, the provisions relating to resource transfers in the Convention also need to be made effective.

8. We expect the Conference to cast aside any proposals seeking to disturb the present balance of equities in the Convention. We have come to the Conference with an open mind to contribute to consensus building. But, India categorically rejects ideas suggesting any new commitments for developing countries. The Berlin Mandate had unhesitatingly stated that no new commitments would be introduced for developing countries. And, the Convention, too, is so very clear. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities recognizes the lack of financial and technological capacities in developing countries and the fact that developed countries are primarily responsible for climate change.

9. India's first and overriding priority is poverty eradication and provision of basic human needs. The Convention acknowledges that the share of global emissions originating in developing countries will grow to meet their social and development needs. Per capita emissions in developing countries are still very low. India's per capita emissions are a very small fraction of many of the world's developed countries. Any idea which seeks further to deprive us of our equitable entitlement to grow can never be allowed to take root.

10. Mr. President: It would indeed be unfortunate if proposals to mitigate climate change seek to deny the majority of the earth's population a quality of life consistent with human dignity. Per capita basis is the most important criteria for deciding the rights to environmental space. This is a direct measure of human welfare. Since the atmosphere is a common heritage of humankind, equity has to be the fundamental basis for its management.

11. Before I conclude, on behalf of the delegation of India, I must express our deep sense of appreciation for the warmth with which we have been greeted everywhere in Kyoto. Indeed, it is a city of great beauty and tradition. May I also thank the people and the Government of Japan for the effort put in for the success of the Conference.

Thank you, Mr. President.