



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8)
New Delhi, 30 October 2002**

**Statement at the high-level segment by Joke Waller-Hunter
Executive Secretary,
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Very Honourable Prime Minister,
Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you on behalf of the UNFCCC Secretariat to the High Level Segment of the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We are extremely honoured that you, Mr. Prime Minister, are with us this morning. It shows the deep commitment of the Government and the People of India to making progress in international cooperation on climate change.

We travelled to New Delhi from Marrakesh via Johannesburg. It has been an eventful year. In Johannesburg the world community reaffirmed sustainable development as our core strategy for jointly addressing poverty eradication, environmental protection and natural resources management. With the Marrakesh Accords in place and announcements made in Johannesburg, the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol is just a matter of months.

Meanwhile, we are being confronted by the negative consequences of development patterns that do not adhere to the principles of sustainability. In recent months, the world has seen an unprecedented number of extreme weather events, be it floods in parts of China and Europe, or droughts in Africa and Asia. These events provide a dramatic backdrop to our conference. They are consistent with model projections by the scientific community. According to the IPCC, they are likely to increase in frequency and severity, which underlines the urgency of national and international action, taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. They underscore the need to reduce our vulnerability and to enhance the resilience of our societies in the face of a changing climate. They point to the need to develop a common methodological approach to address adaptation. They also point to the need for cooperation among the three Rio Conventions, particularly at the national level, and with other organizations. I went on a field trip to the Indian Agricultural Research Institute last Sunday and I was struck by the fact that its approach to sustainable agriculture, which increasingly takes the climate dimension into account, and which is embraced by the farmers community, benefits both mitigation and adaptation.

Our analysis of emission trends and policies and measures during the 1990-2000 period suggest that there is certainly no reason for complacency in Annex I countries when it comes to meeting their Kyoto targets and addressing adaptation. We have also noted that the National Communications from Non-Annex I countries reveal that actions on mitigation and

adaptation are well under way in many countries. I consider the National Communications, which are steadily increasing in number and in quality, to be a pre-eminent tool for exchanging experiences, learning from and embarking on a dialogue on action. I trust that the Round Tables will help to launch such a dialogue, taking the Marrakesh Accords as a roadmap for the implementation of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. As of today, 96 States have ratified the Protocol, representing 37.4% of the emissions of Annex I countries in 1990.

The Clean Development Mechanism is expected to be an important vehicle for implementation and international cooperation. It links sustainable development and climate change, and it provides an additional channel for investments in and technology transfer to developing countries, directly involving the private sector. It embodies the partnership concept that was the trademark of the WSSD. I am very pleased to report the progress that has been made since Marrakesh in making the CDM operational. It is expected that the first projects will be submitted to the Board for its approval by the first quarter of next year. An operational CDM will undoubtedly support the strong push towards sustainable energy patterns, including an increased share of renewable energy, promoted by the WSSD.

Our meeting so far has made a start with more directly linking climate change and sustainable development. Strong emphasis is given to support for capacity building and to support of the Least Developed Countries, which are the most vulnerable among our Parties in all senses. I look forward to the Round Table Discussions and the ensuing Delhi Declaration, as a milestone for implementation of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.
