

Tuesday 21st Nov, 2000

**MINISTERIAL SEGMENT
SIXTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS**

**SPEECH BY
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MALTA**

MR PRESIDENT, EXCELLENCIES, DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

MAY WE FIRST JOIN OTHER MINISTERS AND DISTINGUISHED
COLLEAGUES TO CONGRATULATE YOU AS PRESIDENT OF THIS SIXTH
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE.

THROUGH YOU MR. PRESIDENT, MALTA THANKS AND WISHES TO
EXPRESS ITS APPRECIATION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
NETHERLANDS FOR THE EXCEPTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS MADE IN
HOSTING THIS CONFERENCE IN THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY OF THE HAGUE
AND ESPECIALLY FOR THE KIND HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO US BY
THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE NETHERLANDS.

WE MUST ALSO CONVEY THE APOLOGIES OF DR. FRANCIS ZAMMIT
DIMECH, MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OF MALTA FOR NOT BEING
ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS CONFERENCE. HE HAS IN FACT BEEN
HELD UP WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET WHICH

WILL BE PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL BY THE MALTESE PARLIAMENT DURING THIS WEEK.

IT IS WITH GREAT SATISFACTION THAT WE TAKE THE FLOOR TODAY AT THIS CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE. WE CONSIDER THIS CONVENTION AS A TRANSLATION INTO REALITY OF AN INITIATIVE TAKEN BY THE MALTESE GOVERNMENT IN 1988 DURING THE 43RD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

SINCE THEN, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS INDEED SUCCEEDED TO RISE TO THE OCCASION AND HAS FORMULATED NOT ONLY A BASIC LEGAL FRAMEWORK TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE BUT ALSO TO ADOPT IN A RELATIVELY SHORT SPAN OF TIME, AN INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENT - THE KYOTO PROTOCOL - WITH TARGETS AND IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS, WHICH RECOGNISE THE COMMON BUT DIFFERENTIATED RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY *VIS A VIS* THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

AS WITH ALL OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS, THE ESSENTIAL KEY TO SUCCESS IS THE PROTOCOL'S ABILITY TO RECONCILE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS.

MALTA ACKNOWLEDGES THAT ALL STATES, DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING, RICH AND POOR, SHARE A COMMON INTEREST IN THE PURSUIT OF DEVELOPMENT WHICH MUST BE SUSTAINED IN AN EQUITABLE AND INTEGRATED MANNER.

MALTA THEREFORE APPEALS TO THIS AUGUST BODY THAT OTHER ANNEX I PARTIES FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND UNDERTAKE APPROPRIATE COMMITMENTS WITH REAL AND MEANINGFUL TARGETS, AND THAT NON-ANNEX I PARTIES WHO ARE IN POSITION TO DO SO, SHOULD ADOPT VOLUNTARY MEASURES. LAST BUT NOT LEAST MALTA STRONGLY URGES THIS CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO ENSURE THAT THE NEEDS OF THOSE STATES MOST VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE, PARTICULARLY SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES, ARE MET WITH, BY SECURING THEIR ACCESS TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, CAPACITY BUILDING AND TO APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

IT IS WITH DEEP SATISFACTION THAT WE ANNOUNCE THE APPROVAL BY THE CABINET OF MINISTERS OF MALTA TO RATIFY THE KYOTO PROTOCOL. WE KNOW FULLY WELL THAT THIS WILL BRING NEW CHALLENGES FOR MALTA, AND THAT THESE CHALLENGES WOULD BECOME MORE ONEROUS IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WHEN MALTA BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN UNION. WE ALSO ANNOUNCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AUTHORITY FOR ENVIRONMENT

PROTECTION UNDER WHICH AEGIS THE COMMISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE SET UP, AND AN AUTHORITY FOR RESOURCES. IT IS EXPECTED THAT ONE OF THE PRIORITY TASKS OF THIS LATTER AUTHORITY WOULD BE THE EXPLOITATION OF RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY ON THE ISLAND.

MALTA IS A MINUTE DENSELY POPULATED ARCHIPELAGO OF APPROX. 300 SQUARE KM WITH A RESIDENT POPULATION OF 380,000. TO THAT WE MUST ADD APPROX. 1.2 MILLION TOURISTS THAT FLOCK TO THE ISLAND EVERY YEAR. MALTA IMPORTS ALL ITS ENERGY SOURCES AND RELIES ON FOSSIL FUELS FOR 60% OF ITS WATER SUPPLY, WHICH IS OBTAINED BY THE DESALINATION OF SEA WATER.

MALTA HAS AN INSIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT. HOWEVER, WE WOULD LIKE TO ENSURE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THAT WE WOULD CONTINUE TO STRIVE TO IMPROVE OUR ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY POLICIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR PEOPLE, OUR REGION AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. WE FACE THE PROTOCOL CHALLENGE WITH PRIDE, MORE THAN A BURDEN, AND WE CONSIDER COMPLIANCE WITH SUCH OBLIGATIONS AS A BADGE OF SUCCESS.

TO BE REALISTIC, HOWEVER, WE MUST ADMIT THAT WE CANNOT FACE SUCH CHALLENGES ALONE.

WE WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY, TO THANK THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY AND UNDP FOR ACCEPTING TO SUPPORT MALTA TO CONFORM TO ITS PRESENT OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE CONVENTION. WE WOULD ALSO THANK IN ADVANCE THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR ITS ASSISTANCE TO ACCESSION COUNTRIES IN ASSISTING THEM TO MEET WITH THEIR COMMITMENTS. WE ALSO APPRECIATE THE COMMISSION'S DECISION TO INCORPORATE THE ACCESSION COUNTRIES AS OBSERVERS INTO THE OPERATION OF THE MONITORING MECHANISM.

OUR PRESENT TASK TODAY IS TO ENSURE THAT THIS CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES COMPLETES THE "UNFINISHED BUSINESS" OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL, BY DECIDING ON SPECIFIC RULES AND MODALITIES FOR THE OPERATION OF ITS VARIOUS ELEMENTS.

MALTA AUGURS THAT THIS CONFERENCE SPEEDS UP THE RATIFICATION PROCESS OF THE PROTOCOL, WHILST ENSURING THAT THE PROTOCOL'S ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY IS SAFEGUARDED. TO ACHIEVE THIS A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT DECISIONS MUST BE TAKEN.

MALTA WISHES TO SEE COP-VI WITNESS SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS REGISTERED IN THE APPLICATION OF THE KYOTO MECHANISMS.

MALTA IS ALL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRONG AND COMPREHENSIVE COMPLIANCE SYSTEM WITH STRONG ECONOMIC

IMPLICATIONS THAT ACT AS A DETERRENT IN THE EVENT OF NON-COMPLIANCE.

THE ADOPTION OF DOMESTIC POLICIES AND MEASURES IN INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES, TO IMPLEMENT THE OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE PROTOCOL SHOULD BE SECURED. THIS WOULD ENSURE THAT THE KYOTO MECHANISMS ARE THERE TO SUPPLEMENT DOMESTIC MEASURES AND NOT TO SUBSTITUTE THEM. COMPLIANCE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE ADOPTED, TOGETHER WITH THE SETTING UP OF MECHANISMS TO GAUGE THE "DEMONSTRABLE PROGRESS", SUCH STATE PARTIES WOULD MAKE, IN MEETING THEIR TARGETS.

MALTA FAVOURS THE EU'S TWO-TRACK APPROACH WITH RESPECT TO JOINT IMPLEMENTATION, AS IT IS BOTH AN EFFECTIVE AND FLEXIBLE WAY OF PUTTING INTO EFFECT THIS INNOVATIVE MECHANISM.

CARE SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT THE CLEAN DEVELOPMENT MECHANISM (CDM) DOES NOT LEAD TO ABUSE. MALTA FAVOURS THE PROPOSAL OF POSITIVE LISTING FOR TECHNOLOGIES WHICH SHOULD QUALIFY FOR CERTIFIED EMISSION REDUCTIONS (CERS).

MALTA IS AWARE OF THE SCIENTIFIC UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING SINKS. THIS UNCERTAINTY SHOULD NOT SERVE AS A GUISE TO ALLOW

FOR LACUNAE AND FREE RIDERS WHEN IT COMES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL. MALTA HAD IN FACT WAY BACK AT THE 3RD SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE, FOR A FRAMEWORK CONVENTION OF CLIMATE CHANGE, TEAMED UP WITH THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION, TO URGE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ORGANISE BETTER AND AMELIORATE SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION RELATING TO THE OCEANS, AS SINKS OF GREENHOUSE GASES. IT RELAUNCHES THIS INVITATION TODAY, THIS TIME AROUND OF COURSE, WITH THE MATTER FALLING UNDER THE AUSPICES OF SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE. WE AUGUR THAT OTHER PARTIES WOULD TAKE UP AND SUPPORT OUR INVITATION.

IN CONCLUSION, LET US REMEMBER THAT CLIMATE IS A COMMON CONCERN. ITS PROTECTION CANNOT BE ACHIEVED BY ANY SINGLE COUNTRY OR REGION, BE IT DEVELOPED OR OTHERWISE. A CONCERTED EFFORT BY ALL NATIONS IS REQUIRED. LET US AGREE TO FULFIL OUR RESPECTIVE OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS ENSURING THE ECOLOGICAL BALANCE NEEDED TO PRESERVE CLIMATE IN THE VITAL INTEREST OF BOTH PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.