

UNFCCC COP 4 IN BUENOS AIRES – HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT 12 NOVEMBER 1998

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NORWAY

Madame President, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The last weeks' tragedy in Central-America has been a reminder of what climate change is really about. I would like to express my deepest sympathy for those affected by the disaster. We know that the risk of a higher frequency of such events, as well as more extreme conditions, could increase as the world's emissions of greenhouse gases are growing. Therefore the Kyoto Protocol is only a first step to achieve the objective of the Convention. In the future the developed countries must accept even more ambitious commitments. The catastrophe also points to the necessity to address the needs of developing countries vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

Madame President; We need to take more action now. Norway clearly acknowledges its commitments to implement domestic policies and measures. The earlier we start, the better the chances to modify emission trends and reduce the costs. All stakeholders will need to contribute, and we appreciate that our industry and local communities are already active. My Government was one of the first to produce a concrete response to the Kyoto Protocol, when we submitted a White Paper to the Parliament in April.

Outlining a strategy for the implementation of the Protocol, this paper gave priority to further domestic action. The Government made concrete proposals on extension of the CO₂-taxes and introduction of additional measures for controlling emissions of other gases. The proposed package would close more than half the gap between the commitment and our projected levels in 2010. We will take further steps both domestically and through the mechanisms over the next years. The proposals were discussed by the Parliament in June. As part of the extended use of policies and measures, the Government recently appointed a Commission which will outline the features of a domestic system for emissions trading.

Madame President; We need to build an open, transparent and credible system for the implementation mechanisms agreed in Kyoto. The system must contain requirements for participation, reporting and verification, as well as for sanctions. These mechanisms must ensure that there will be real reductions in emissions. Norway stresses the necessity to achieve progress on this issue as crucial for the entry into force of the Protocol. COP 4 must produce concrete timetables, to make sure that the mechanisms will be operational soon.

The use of flexible mechanisms will be a supplement to our domestic efforts. An evaluation of the experience with Activities Implemented Jointly would produce relevant information to make better decisions on Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism.

CDM and JI will be important tools for facilitating transfer of technology among Parties. Transfer of technology is necessary for achieving a sustainable development with less emissions. We must acknowledge that the industry will play the major part in this activity. Still governments have a

role in facilitating such transfer. In the longer run, implementation of new technology is vital to combating climate change, and industry is again the main contributor. Making it more costly to pollute, the Kyoto Protocol has created incentives to speed up this process.

Madame President; We also need to advance a process that will lead us to a limitation of the global emissions, based on the principles of common but differensiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. To combine this with sustainable economic development and poverty eradication is a necessary task. We should seriously start addressing this issue in an equitable way.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting a very able and interested In-Depth-Review team, which is currently assessing our National Communication. The team had participants from both developing and developed countries. I believe that this proses is building the confidence and capacity we need among Parties. The process around the communication is a pillar of the Convention, which will be increasingly important as the Kyoto Protocol enters into force. It could also, in addressing our policies and measures in a qualitative way, inform the COP of how the use of the flexible mechanisms is supplemental to domestic action, as well as how we make demonstrable progress by 2005.

Many comments have been made about the symbolism of the name of our beautiful venue; Buenos Aires. We still have time to let the "good airs" of spring blow, and ensure the success of the Conference,

Thank you, Madame President.