

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: PHILIPPINES
VICTOR O. RAMOS
Secretary, Department of Environment
and Natural Resources

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Philippines, I express to you our warmest congratulations for your election. The negotiations have been difficult. They continue to be difficult. We are, however, confident that, with your wisdom and leadership, we will move forward to a successful conclusion. We also express our gratitude for the warm welcome given to us by the government and the people of Japan and the government and people of this great and beautiful city, Kyoto.

Mr. President,

In Kyoto, we end a process that we began in Berlin. But that process had its roots a decade earlier when we were uncertain. In the shadow of our uncertainty, we hesitated.

Today, we are certain. **The world is warming. The climate is changing. There is something wrong. Climate change is not natural. We cannot wait. We must not continue with business as usual. We must act. And we must act on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.**

That is why we are here today and why we have come to Kyoto.

We come knowing that the balance of evidence suggests a discernible human influence on our global climate. We come knowing that our tampering with nature is already taking its toll on natural ecosystems and human societies. And we come to Kyoto knowing that we are not doing enough.

Mr. President,

Tomorrow, the Berlin mandate process ends. We now have only two days left to work. **It is time to decide.**

It is time for our Annex I partners to agree to **reductions** in their greenhouse gas emissions. **Meaningful and substantial reductions** as legally binding commitments. **Early and prompt reductions** of all six main greenhouse gasses.

The bottom line, Mr. President, is whether or not the QUELROS commitments agreed upon by Annex I parties, here in Kyoto, send the right signal: **Business as usual is over. It is time for change. It is time to act.**

For this reason, Mr. President, these new commitments by Annex I parties must be credible and transparent. Above all, the agreement we must reach in Kyoto must be honest and straightforward. A protocol with high numbers but full of loopholes does not interest us. A protocol with lofty principles but without teeth, through compliance procedures and penalties, is unacceptable. A protocol based purely on political interests, without due regard for science and the consequences to our environment, we will not sign. That is why we are cautious about the inclusion of sinks, emissions trading, and joint implementation.

Mr. President,

The Philippines cannot leave Kyoto without an agreement that will require early action. **A legally binding emission reduction target for the year 2005 is absolutely essential for us.** This prompt and early start is necessary to send a strong signal - in particular to the energy sector, the capital markets and the investment community - that we mean what we say.

Mr. President,

On developing country commitments, let me make our position clear: The Philippines considers climate change a serious threat. We will be affected by climate change. Indeed, we are already affected by it. By sea level rise that will endanger many of our islands and coastal areas. By the severity and unpredictability of weather events that result from it. By the risks it poses to our biodiversity and food supply. It is, therefore, foolish for us to say that we will not do something about climate change.

Mr. President,

We are doing something. We are **meaningfully participating** in responding to climate change. We are implementing the Convention. Through the national action plan that we are about to adopt, we will, regardless of what happens to Kyoto, advance our existing commitments. We will, regardless of the broken promises of providing new and additional financial resources and technology transfer, implement mitigation as well as adaptation measures. In this regard, we also endorse the Kyoto Basket of climate stabilization strategies.

Mr. President,

As we complete our work, let us not be distracted by the cynical use of the blame game. Let us not be drawn to debate with those lobbyists who are responsible for propaganda that, according to our Executive Secretary, emanates from certain sectors that are on the defensive - those who unashamedly play games with the science and statistics of climate change. These are people who do not deserve to be heard. These are people motivated only by their greed and who do not care for our world.

Mr. President,

It all boils down to this: the obligation that we have to the world and to each other. That is

why we are here in Kyoto and why we are working so hard. The heated debates over QUELROs, PAMS, sinks, Article 4.1, compensation and clean development funds, flexibility mechanisms, banking and borrowing, baskets - all these are real issues. The way we resolve them have real repercussions. Islands disappearing forever. People getting sick of malaria and other diseases. Species dying. Storms and droughts wrecking havoc. These are the consequences if we do not find the right answers. Or if we give the wrong ones.

Mr. President,

In the end, these ten days in Kyoto are all about our shared humanity. We are here because we care and because we care for our world. We are here because we care for each other and for our children and their children. And that is why we cannot and must not fail. For, Mr. President, as your poets have said:

We do not want to be afraid of the rains and long for the memory of how they once made our mountains more beautiful to see, and,

We do not want to weep for our children as we watch the sea.

Thank you, Mr. President.