

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE JOHN E. AFFUL, MP MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, GHANA AT THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA, NOVEMBER 12, 1998

Madam President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of my delegation, I warmly congratulate you on your well-deserved election and assure you of our continued support and co-operation. My delegation also wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the people and government of Argentina for the hospitality shown us. We further commend the Executive Secretary and his staff for the excellent work done in facilitating our work at this Conference.

Recent climatic variability events such as El nino and other climate-related disasters and their impacts on sustainable development and continued economic security of the affected countries must present to the global community the compelling evidence of the likely destructive impacts of global climate change. Despite the scientific uncertainties about the linkages between climatic variability and global climate change, we can rely on the well-acknowledged "*precautionary-principle*" to guide our cooperative efforts towards the choice of effective mitigation and adaptation measures to climate change.

It is in this light, that Ghana sees the current prioritization of mitigation measures and the relegation of adaptation measures as unfortunate. With our scarce resources, Ghana is committed to finding effective mitigation and adaptation measures consistent with her national sustainable development objectives and her obligations under international environmental regimes. Ghana has carried out national inventories of greenhouse gases, the results of which indicated that, as at 1996, Ghana provided a net sink for greenhouse gases. In spite of these findings, Ghana is still committed to implementing its national initiatives in the energy, industrial and forestry sectors to reduce her emissions.

However, Madam President, Ghana will also like to reiterate Africa's and the developing countries' serious concerns that the cost of mitigation and adaptation to global climate change is an *added burden* on countries with relatively limited capacities and resources. These concerns must reinforce the principles of "*common-but-differentiated responsibilities*" and "*additionality*" to justify the transfer of technology that would improve our capacities and offer the enabling environment for our effective participation in dealing with global climate change.

Ghana is receptive to the Clean Development Mechanism as a cooperative mechanism but with mixed optimism based particularly on Africa's relative competitiveness and her experience with previous project-based mechanisms like the AIJ. We will therefore admonish that, the global cooperation for finding appropriate modalities and operational frameworks for the CDM must be informed not only by market principles, but also by the principles that allow for creative partnerships, equity considerations, universal participation, transparency, and principles that offer the mutual assistance for fulfilling our commitments under the climate change convention.

Madam President, in view of these, we urge developed countries to show strong leadership in reducing their emissions to the agreed targets and within the specified time frames. Chapter 34 of Agenda 21 urges Annex-1 Parties to transfer resources and environmental-technologies on "non-commercial" and "preferential" terms to developing countries. I call on developed countries to take practical steps to implement this issue. This will facilitate the mutual performance of our obligations under the climate change convention. We assure all Parties of our continued commitment and cooperation in dealing with climate change and global sustainable development.

I thank you.