

中 华 人 民 共 和 国 代 表 团

Delegation of the People's Republic of China

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(Translation)

Statement by H. E. Mr. Liu Jiang,
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at the High Level Segment of
The Fourth Session of the Conference of the
Parties
to the UNFCCC

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**STATEMENT BY H.E.MR.LIU JIANG,
HEAD OF THE CHINESE DELEGATION**

Madame President,

This is a session of the Conference of the Parties to the U.N Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) being hosted for the first time by a developing country. Please allow me to congratulate the Government of Argentina, and please accept my congratulations on your election as the President of this session.

About a year ago, we Representatives of all Country Parties adopted the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC. The Kyoto Protocol is an important legal instrument, yet it is only a limited instrument and a supplement to part of the Convention. The Kyoto Protocol cannot change the status of the Convention, nor the responsibilities of Parties thereto. The Convention remains the basis of our work, and will continue to be the basis of our work in the future. The Convention has established the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" between the developed country Parties and the developing country Parties, and the principle of equity. In accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, in view of their historical and current contribution to the greenhouse gas (GHG) concentration in the atmosphere, the developed country Parties have the main responsibilities for the human induced climate change; while the developing countries, whose per capita GHG emissions are still very low, have to address, as their first and overriding priority, economic development and poverty eradication. In accordance with the principle of equity, the inequity between the developed countries' "luxury emissions" and developing countries' "survival emissions" must be duly redressed. It will not do to use the pretext of "A global issue needs global solution" to attempt at confusing the differentiated responsibilities between the developed and the developing countries. The principles of equity and of "common but differentiated responsibilities" are the two pillars of the Convention and will remain the basic principles to guide the negotiations and co-operation in the future.

The developing countries are, and will remain in the future, the major victims of the adverse effects of climate change. "All men are created equal". For the reasons known to all, the developing countries are still very poor; but they have the inalienable right to survival and the right to development. They have the right to pursue a

better life. They have the right to demand that the developed countries implement the commitments under the Convention. The developing countries are fully aware of the importance of developing economy, protecting the environment and conserving resources, and are fully aware of the importance of the realization of sustainable development. They have been making contribution to addressing climate change in their own way. Since the 1980s, the developing countries have had meaningful participation in the efforts of mankind to address climate change. They actively participated in the drafting negotiations on the "Ministerial Declaration" of the Second World Climate Conference adopted in 1990, thereby setting forth the principles and elements of the subsequent Convention on Climate Change. They participated not only in the research work of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), but also in the formulation of the Convention. At the First Session of the Conference of the Parties they put forward the draft of **Decision 1** of COP-I, thereby laying down the basis of the **Berlin Mandate**. Moreover, in accordance with Article 4 Paragraph 1 of the Convention, they undertake to address climate change in light of their country-specific situations. And, pursuant to Article 12 Paragraph 1 of the Convention, they are ready to prepare and submit the initial *national communication* within three years of the availability of financial resources. Having actively participated in the formulation of the Kyoto Protocol, they have committed to joining in the efforts to continue to advance the implementation of the existing commitments under the Convention, as provided for in Art.10 of the Protocol. More importantly, the developing countries have contributed to modifying the longer-term trends of climate change by adopting all kinds of national measures in the light of their own sustainable development strategies. The developing countries are moreover making positive preparations for participation in "Clean Development Mechanism" project activities, in order to promote their own sustainable development and to assist developed country Parties in achieving compliance with part of their emissions reduction commitments. The developing countries are willing to explore positive ways of co-operation, but are opposed to any attempt which runs counter to the Convention, to impose on them emissions reduction or limitation commitments.

Like other developing countries, China is one of the victims of the adverse effects of climate change. Attaching great importance to the problem of global climate change, the Chinese Government formulated, and published for implementation, China's sustainable development strategy soon after the U.N. Conference on Environment and

Development held in Rio. Furthermore, China has made her share of contribution to modifying the longer-term trends of climate change by such national measures as controlling her population growth, energy conservation and persistent large-scale afforestation. Besides, following the structure reform of the Government in March, the readjusted National Coordinating Group on Climate Change is now headed by the State Development Planning Commission with participation by all relevant Ministries and Commissions, thereby bringing efforts at addressing climate change and development planning into a holistic track. I believe, this will also contribute to the realization of China's sustainable development strategy.

China is willing to make more contribution to addressing climate change, but she is faced with tremendous practical difficulties. China is a developing country with a population of 1.2 billion and a low income country with the per capita GDP of only 728 US dollars in 1997(according to 1998 edition of U.N "World Economic & Social Survey). China's per capita GHG emission accounts for only 1/7 that of the average level of the developed countries; her national annual per capita electricity is only 700 kwh; and nearly 60 million of her people are still living below the poverty line. Therefore, poverty eradication and economic development are the overriding priorities for the Chinese Government. In view of all this, at COP-3, i.e., the Kyoto Conference, the Head of the Chinese Delegation solemnly stated: it is not possible for the Chinese Government to undertake the obligation of reduction of GHGs emissions until the country develops to the level of a medium-developed country. This position of the Chinese Government is reasonable and rational and will not be changed. At the same time, however, China seeks to, and will continue to seek to, abate the increase rate in GHGs emissions in line with her own sustainable development strategy. We in China are now making efforts in the following four aspects: First, striving to control the population growth rate and realize zero population growth by the middle of the next century. Second, implementing vigorously the " Energy Conservation Law " to raise energy efficiency. Third, intensifying the efforts to increase the use of new and renewable sources of energy, including the development of hydro, nuclear and wind power and solar energy, so as to gradually bring down the proportion of fossil fuels in the nation's energy structure. Fourth, continuing to enhance the sinks of CO₂ through persistent efforts in afforestation, combating desertification and development of eco-agriculture. China will continue to actively promote and participate in international cooperation. We have already cooperated with the

countries concerned in the project of " activities implemented jointly ". We hope that broader international cooperation will be conducted at the project level. And we hope that the developed countries can provide technology transfer and financial assistance in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, with a view to strengthening China's capabilities of addressing climate change. Failure to implement developed countries' commitments on technology transfer and financial assistance pursuant to Article 4 of the Convention will severely affect the extent to which we will implement our obligation under the Convention .

Madame President,

This session is a session of the COP right after COP-3 held in Kyoto. The current Session is faced with the arduous task of promoting the implementation of the Convention and the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. Despite the fact that the Convention has been in force for five years, not all the developed countries have shown good faith in returning to their 1990 levels their anthropogenic emissions of GHGs by the end of this century, with most of them even increasing their emissions of GHGs. Besides, there is no progress in technology transfer and great difficulty in providing financial assistance to the developing countries. Therefore, the present and future sessions of the COP should at least attach equal importance to the agenda items under the Convention and those relating to the Kyoto Protocol. In our view , all countries should broaden the vision to explore various means of addressing climate change which are suited to national conditions. The fundamental way for mankind to address climate change is developing and using new technologies in following a path of sustainable development. The COP should take measures to encourage the invention and application of new technologies and to establish an effective mechanism for technology transfer. It is our hope that the COP should create a kind of new atmosphere and mechanism for cooperation in accordance with the spirit and the principles of the Convention, and that the present session will become a turning point in this regard. Let us start exploring effective ways and means for project-level cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, for technology transfer and financial assistance, as well as for the development and application of new technologies. Let us join hands to exert due efforts in addressing climate change.

Thank you, Madame President.