



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署

PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by Mr Klaus Toepfer, Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Under-Secretary-General, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme.

Delivered at the opening day of the High Level Segment of the Sixth Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC, The Hague, November 20, 2000

Let me remind you of the message of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who I have the honour to represent here today. He said the involvement of young people in this conference is crucial. He said we must chart a new path of development, in which all countries have an equal right to participate. He said we need to make radical changes in the world economy to address climate change, and he pointed out the vital role of the private sector.

On Saturday we heard the voice of civil society, in the building of a symbolic dike around this convention centre. Organisers gave UNEP a sand bag – to remind us again and again that climate change is already a sad reality. Let us make the ratification and the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol a real dike against climate change.

Considering our past and our future, I sense we have reached a threshold. That the concepts of sustainable development which were incubated at Rio are starting to bite.

The Malmo Declaration, drafted recently by the world's environment ministers, underlined the need and possibilities for a new era of solidarity – to fight poverty in the developing countries and to change the consumption patterns in the developed ones.

At this crucial climate conference I sense we appreciate the historical significance of the opportunity before us. That there is sufficient goodwill among us. The IPCC has delivered a clear message about the reality of climate change. Nature has given us all the warnings we need. Therefore – work it out!

What makes human beings unique is their capacities for self awareness and creativity.

Let us reflect sufficiently on the gravity of the situation we face, let us recognize the consequences of ignoring it, and see the privilege and responsibility we have through our participation in this meeting.

This week will see a trading of information and perspectives, an examination of words on paper and searches for meaning, the translation of technical information to political language on a scale that few can comprehend.

I am sure that by the end of it you will have done everything you can do – in reflection and creativity – to - in the words of our Dutch hosts - work it out.

There are three things that must come from this meeting:

First, rules on how to meet the Kyoto Protocol targets must be clarified. The protocol needs to be ratified and it must have environmental integrity. A firm foundation for the future is essential.

Second, a signal that is sufficiently strong to unleash the creative forces of entrepreneurship, to accelerate the transition towards a climate friendly economy.

Under UNEP's Financial Initiative over 250 banks and insurance companies agreed last week to adjust their portfolios, favouring investments that help mitigate climate change. In the developed world the combination of technology and consumer choices, spurred by civil society action, can put us on this path

Third, we need a generosity of spirit that leaves room and opportunities for all countries to enter the path of clean development and to adapt to the shocks that climate change will bring. Eradicating poverty must go hand in hand with stabilizing climate and protecting the environment. This was a main message from the UN Millennium Assembly, especially with regard to the great continent of Africa

The United Nations Environment Programme was here at the very beginning of this process.

We are in the middle, trying always to integrate, to involve, to build awareness, to share knowledge, to advise and to move forward ...

And we will play our part in taking up what you, the government negotiators, agree to.

In your work over the next week I wish you strength and courage and compassion, but most of all I wish you wisdom

Let us integrate our capacities for self awareness and creativity, let us find a fully human response to the challenge of transforming our economy from one which threatens our well being to one that sustains and nourishes life in all its diversity.

Thank you ...



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Press Release

THREE COMPONENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION - UNEP

The Hague, November 20, 2000 - The top United Nations official at the World Climate Change Conference today urged ministers to act to transform the global economy from one which threatens human well being to one that nourishes life in all its diversity.

Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Klaus Toepfer identified three things which needed to emerge from the negotiations this week.

"Rules on how to meet the Kyoto Protocol targets must be clarified," Mr Toepfer said. "The protocol needs to be ratified and it must have environmental integrity."

Mr Toepfer also called for a strong signal to be given to the market. "We need the creative forces of entrepreneurship to accelerate us towards a climate friendly future."

Thirdly, Mr Toepfer called for a generosity of spirit. "All countries must be given the opportunity to enter the path of clean development and to adapt to the shocks that climate change will bring."

"Eradicating poverty must go hand in hand with stabilizing climate and protecting the environment," Mr Toepfer said.

Delegates were told last week of the mounting evidence for climate change, with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established by UNEP and the World Meteorological Organisation, now projecting a 1.5 to 6 degree Celsius temperature rise over the next century.

Mr Toepfer urged delegates to reflect on the severity of the issue, to recognize the consequences of ignoring it, and the historical opportunity being presented through The Hague meeting.

The Sixth Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change entered its second week today with the arrival of ministers from many of the 162 signatory countries.

At Kyoto in 1997 industrialised countries agreed to collective greenhouse gas emission cuts of 5.2 percent against 1990 levels to be achieved by 2012.

The flexibility mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol – emissions trading, joint implementation and the clean development mechanism - have been a major focus of negotiations during the first week.

End

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