

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Statement by Mr. Pekka Haavisto,
Minister for the Environment and Development Cooperation
of Finland
at
the Fourth Session of the Conference of the Parties
to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Buenos Aires, 12 November 1998

Mr. / Mrs. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I, on behalf of the Government of Finland, extend our sincere gratitude to the Government of Argentina for hosting this important meeting, and for all hospitality shown. The road from Rio via Kyoto to Buenos Aires has been marked by historic milestones for sustained future.

Recently we have experienced hurricanes, floods, typhoons, El Nino and Mitch. All these catastrophes indicate that we have to take additional steps urgently. I wish to express my deep sympathy to all Central American nations. During the next few hours we have to decide on a concrete Work Programme, which should devote considerable attention to the concerns of developing countries. This Work Programme should include the three Kyoto Mechanisms, timetables, compliance as well as policies and measures.

In Finland we have focused on the use of economic instruments, such as energy and carbon taxes, which we introduced already in 1990 as the first country in the world, efficiency improvements of energy production and strengthening transport and waste management policies. Finnish industry has also signed voluntary energy conservation agreements with the Ministry of Trade and Industry

Finland already uses extensively combined heat and power production and renewables, especially wood based biomass. In fact Finland tops in the statistics for the industrialised countries in the use of bioenergy. On the basis of the bioenergy programme, wood-residues from our forestry harvesting are used for producing heat and power for both industry and municipalities. In Finland some energy companies market so called green energy produced with renewable resources to the

environmentally oriented consumers.

We are committed to fulfilling most of our target by national effort and through local actions. In addition to domestic actions the Kyoto Protocol also provides instruments to combat climate change globally. Since the cost of reducing emissions varies significantly between countries, a more cost-effective solution can be reached by allowing countries with high reduction costs to pay for projects in other countries, through the adopted Kyoto- mechanisms. However, the necessary rules and guidelines need to be adopted first to ensure accountability, credibility and environmental surplus.

Finland wants to take her share in the global responsibility. As discussed broadly in this conference the question of technology transfer and related capacity building is essential. We see that bilateral cooperation can play an important role in this.

Finland is ready to provide increasing support and financial resources to developing countries for climate projects. Approximately half of Finland's new development projects has been directed to environmental and climate projects.

It is important that the question of adaptation and the needs of the least developed countries will also be addressed by the new mechanisms provided by the Kyoto Protocol. Especially we acknowledge the difficult discussions on financing regional and country programmes for combating desertification, particularly in Africa.

Besides supporting Clean Development Mechanism Finland wants to cooperate under the joint implementation-concept with our neighbouring countries in Central and Eastern Europe . We have already financed some national climate strategy studies and we are considering deepening this work towards concrete projects. This is one of the reasons why Finland and some Finnish enterprises have been actively involved in the development of the World Bank's studies and activities in our neighbouring areas. We are also interested in expanding this cooperation with developing countries in the framework of Clean Development Mechanism.

We all know, that the question of forests deserves great attention also in this process. The focus on forests as sinks should be mutually supportive to the goals of conserving the biodiversity and in support of combating desertification as well as of development needs. Therefore, on a global level a holistic approach to forests is necessary.

We have been impressed by the role NGOs have taken before and after Kyoto - as well as here in Buenos Aires. This has enhanced public awareness of climate change and has helped to place climate high on the political agenda. We can't leave Buenos Aires with empty promises and without any concrete goals for the next years to come. El Nino and Mitch gave a warning that the climate change may be a catastrophe that hits us all. In Kyoto we have set the targets- in Buenos Aires we need to take actions.