

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT MADE BY THE HONOURABLE JOHN E. AFFUL
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AT
THE THIRD SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
KYOTO, JAPAN, DECEMBER 9, 1997

Mr. President,

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

The voice of science on climate change is loud and clear. The world's climate has undergone rapid change over the past century. Furthermore the projected changes in climate due to doubling of carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere by the year 2060 could have significant and adverse impacts on many of the earth's ecological systems. The consequential socio-economic repercussions for food supply, water resources and human health would be serious. In most developing countries these impacts are potentially irreversible. It is in view of this and our desire to contribute to the resolution of this global problem that the Government of Ghana signed and ratified the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Republic of Ghana has made significant progress in the preparation of the Country's initial national communication. This is not only to fulfil our commitment under the Convention but more importantly to ensure that our developmental efforts are environmentally sustainable. We have also initiated a portfolio of measures aimed at reducing our net emissions of greenhouse gases. These include *inter alia*, the sustainable management of our forest resources, energy-efficiency programmes and the development of national capacity to use renewable energy-based technology, especially photovoltaics for rural electrification.

Mr. President, we subscribe to the precautionary principle, which has served humankind well in the case of the Montreal Protocol. Current scientific evidence has vindicated those who advocated for far reaching measures to be taken to reduce the use of ozone depleting substances even when firm scientific evidence was then non-existent.

We therefore owe it as a duty to our selves and the future generations to succeed at this historic meeting aimed at adopting a strong Protocol to reduce the global emissions of greenhouse gases. Issues at stake concern the future of our common planet. If the international community fails to act positively now, we shall be risking the survival of vulnerable states, particularly small island and peninsular states and countries prone to drought and desertification.

We urge developed country Parties to show strong leadership and significantly reduce their emissions and adopt the needed policies and measures that would ensure the attainment of agreed targets within specified time frames. These policies and measures should be designed and implemented in such a way that they do not adversely affect the economies of developing countries.

Mr. President, we urge that in this last round of negotiations there should be no departure from the Berlin Mandate so as to ensure the successful conclusions of the Kyoto Protocol negotiations.

I thank you.