

Executive Secretary, UNFCCC

**Welcoming remarks at COP 6, 4th plenary meeting
The Hague, 21 November 2000**

Welcome to the challenge of The Hague. Many of us have been working towards this moment for the last three years, since Kyoto; some of us since COP 1, five years ago; and a few since the negotiations on the Convention were launched in 1991. This is the moment to make it all come together, to make it work. It is a moment for political imagination but not for political expedients, since we must build solid foundations for the future. The results of your negotiations must drive the next phase of a long-term global climate strategy – a strategy that engages all Parties in a common effort to modify long-term emission trends, an effort calling for different roles and responsibilities.

I continue to hope that when this conference ends, many of you will be ready to stand up and be counted among those who will ratify the Kyoto Protocol and bring it into force. I continue to hope that this conference will make a major contribution to integrating climate strategy in sustainable development and will mobilize adequate financial and technological support for this effort.

In facing this challenge, we need optimism; we need confidence and perseverance; and we need to keep in mind not only national interests, but also the common good. We have all proclaimed our commitment to success. Each of us must now draw strength from our inner sources of inspiration to achieve it. I wish you all well. I will be with you to the end. I am confident it will not be a “bitter” end, but a “sweet” one.