

**Statement of Commissioner Wallström to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

**The Sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-6)**

**The Hague, 21 November 2000**

**Dear Friends in the fight against climate change,**

We are gathered here to take crucial decisions by the end of this week. The framework laid down in the Kyoto Protocol must be completed, for the ratification phase to begin. For the EU, the way to ratification must be based on decisions that ensure the environmental integrity of the Protocol, that will lead to real emissions reductions in industrialised countries, and that will give us clear rules and the confidence that they will be observed.

We have pledged our support for the entry into force of the Protocol by 2002 and the European Community is committed to start the process of ratification within weeks of the conclusion of this session if the results are right.

Latest indications confirm that the Community and its Member States, acting jointly, are on track to meet their commitment under the Convention to stabilise their emissions at 1990 levels by the end of this year. The Community, and its Member States will also act jointly to fulfil their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol. Their demanding 8% emissions reduction will be achieved as provided for by Article 4 of the Protocol.

Friends, there are many things that we must decide here in The Hague, including the need for domestic action, clear and effective rules for the mechanisms, a legally binding system to give all countries confidence that the Kyoto targets will be respected, and agreement on ways and means to address the needs of developing countries.

Generally, emissions in industrialised countries are still going up. This trend must be curbed, and entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol is essential to convince both citizens and business of the need to act. In the EU, we are developing a range of additional measures through the European Climate Change Programme to bring down emissions further. We have also published a Green Paper on emissions trading, but we do recognise that while emissions trading may be effective in certain sectors, it cannot replace the need for a range of policies to reduce emissions.

The decisions taken here must ensure that all industrialised countries take action to bring down their emissions, which is why we insist that the use of the Kyoto mechanisms must be balanced with domestic action. Industrialised countries need to make a substantial shift towards energy efficient production, renewable energy sources and sustainable transportation.

Forestry and land use are an important element in our fight against climate change. The IPCC report informed us about the scale, scientific uncertainty and risks related to sinks. Decisions taken here on forestry and land-use have

the potential to make the reduction targets agreed upon in Kyoto meaningless. Carbon storage from existing forest alone amounts to about four times the emission reduction target of all Annex I countries. This must be avoided, because it would undermine the credibility of the Protocol and weaken the commitment to it. Decisions taken here for the first commitment period will also have to establish a process to define solid rules for future commitment periods.

The EU wants workable and effective rules that ensure the environmental integrity of the Protocol. We must enable the Clean Development Mechanism to take up an immediate role in stimulating economic development in developing countries in a less polluting way. A solid framework of rules must also be agreed for Emissions Trading and Joint Implementation, so that governments and companies can prepare for the use of these mechanisms. And a compliance system must be sufficiently strong to ensure that the Kyoto targets are respected.

Industrialised and developing countries must stand together. We need to foster the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and to identify the most effective options for adaptation. Building the capacity of our partners in developing countries is key to success, particularly in the least developed countries.

Mr. President, over the next days, the world's eyes will be on The Hague. People all over the world rightly expect us, the politicians, to have the courage to make decisions that can help combat climate change. The challenge in The Hague is to reach final decisions on all issues that safeguard the environmental integrity of the Protocol and have sufficient certainty to enable widespread ratification of the Protocol. This requires that whatever we decide will stand up to public scrutiny and be able to mobilize citizen's support. Mr. President, I join your appeal to "work it out".

Thank you, Mr. President.