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Conference of the Parties to the  
United Nations Framework Convention  
on Climate Change  
Fourth Session  
Buenos Aires, 2-13 November 1998

Wednesday, 11 November 1998  
a.m.  
Fourth plenary meeting  
Presidential ceremony

**Draft notes for Ms. María-Julia Alsogaray  
President of COP 4**

It is my pleasure to declare open the fourth plenary meeting of the Conference of the Parties at its fourth session. Today is a turning point at the Conference. The subsidiary bodies have concluded their work after a week of intensive efforts led by their Chairmen. We look forward this afternoon to hearing the results of their deliberations.

The last three days of the Conference will define the success of Buenos Aires, and ministers from around the world are beginning to gather here in the "city of good airs". To help us launch this final and critical phase, we will have the privilege this morning of listening to messages from two important individuals, under agenda item 7 (a). The first is from Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, who is unable to be with us today but who will speak through Mr. Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. The second is from Dr. Carlos Saul Menem,

President of the Republic of Argentina and of the host Country of this Conference, who honours us by addressing the Conference in person.

These statements demonstrate the **high importance** placed on the issue both by the entire **international community**, assembled in the **United Nations Organization**, and by my country.

I would first like to pass the floor to the distinguished **representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Nitin Desai**. **Under-Secretary-General Desai**, you have the floor.

*\*\*Mr. Desai reads the Secretary-General's message\*\**

I would like to extend the **deepest appreciation** of the Conference to the **Secretary-General** for his important message, and to **Mr. Desai** for travelling here to deliver it to us. I kindly ask him to **relay to the Secretary-General** the **thanks of the Conference** for sending us these inspiring words.

It is now my great honour and pleasure to invite the **President of the Republic of Argentina, His Excellency Dr. Carlos Saul Menem**, to take the floor to address the Conference.

Before he takes the floor, however, President Menem will be **presented** with environmental messages from three young Argentine students from the Columbia School in Buenos Aires. These students are part of a group of young people who have been participating in a Gakkos Global Class Network project, an initiative focussed on disseminating information on sustainable management to children around the world through the Internet and through the encouragement of classroom projects on themes such as recycling and the use of alternative energy sources. This year, the Gakkos project aims at producing a “community of global citizens for the twenty-first century”, by stimulating the exchange of ideas and achievements.

The messages that will be presented are intended as a symbol of the Gakkos project, and as a demonstration of the students’ commitment.

*\*\*Pause while the President of Argentina moves to the podium and receives the Gakkos messages\*\**

*\*\*President of Argentina speaks\*\**

On behalf of the Conference, I wish to extend **sincerest appreciation** to President Menem for his statement. I believe his words are an indication of not only **Argentina’s leading role** in the Convention process, but also his **personal commitment** to the issues at stake. I am convinced that we will all keep his **important message** in mind as we move into the final days of our session.

**\*\*Pause\*\***

I would now like to **suspend** the meeting for a few moments to allow President Menem to depart. We will then resume to hear **statements by inter-governmental organizations** under **agenda item 7 (d)**.

I invite the delegates to **rise as the President departs from the hall**.

**\*\*Brief break\*\***