

Statement by:

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At the Ninth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework

Convention on Climate change

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Mr. President,

Distinguished Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to congratulate you on your election as the President of this important Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change. Every day we become more and more aware of the threats that anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases present for our planet, and of the potential for "dangerous anthropogenic interference in the climate system. In the period since last year's session of the Conference of the Parties in New Delhi, India, we have seen further scientific evidence of glacial retreat, ice-shelf breakups, and ecological effects associated with atmospheric and surface warming. Importantly, we have also

witnessed human health impacts associated with severe heat waves, and short-term adverse meteorological conditions that stress the response capabilities of even developed countries. It is, therefore, becoming increasingly apparent that the threat is real, that it is significant, and that climate change is already happening. Hence, the urgency of the response to this global threat hardly needs to be overemphasized.

The Marrakech Accords adopted at COP-7 as well as the Delhi Ministerial Declaration adopted at COP-8 have put the global climate change debate on a new footing. The Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development underlines that Parties have a right to, and should, promote sustainable development, and that economic development is essential for adopting measures to address climate change. That Declaration also notes the necessity of building on the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, thereby linking climate change objectives with the implementation of the agenda for sustainable development. In this regard, developing nations, particularly the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, will face major problems in adapting to the adverse effects of climate change, and in managing the impacts associated with the implementation of response measures.

The Kyoto Protocol represents an important first step in enhancing mitigation measures through quantified targets in the early part of the twenty first century. The prompt start of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), as an innovative market-based mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol, is encouraging. If the Kyoto Protocol enters into force, it would become possible to begin addressing climate change within the context of sustainable development through such North-South partnerships based on this mechanism. The CDM projects must contribute to sustainable development of developing countries, in addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Such a project development approach will promote the use of renewable energy systems and cleaner energy technologies, and increase energy efficiency improvements in those countries.

But this must be recognized as merely an initial first step in a future that will ever more clearly link economic development with climate change activities. A recent UNFCCC workshop addressed such relationship that has been identified by both the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol: the need for countries relying heavily on fossil fuels to diversify their economies. That workshop found that diversification was a natural result of economic development, and that it was therefore very difficult to separate special climate change needs and activities from those associated with other development goals.

The Monterrey Consensus notes with concern, however, the dramatic shortfall in resources required to achieve internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Declaration. These goals, which seek to eliminate poverty, improve social conditions and raise living standards, as critical to ensure social but also environmental sustainability.

Accordingly, attempts to modify the energy infrastructure, fuel utilization, land use and the numerous related concerns, which you are gathered here to address with regard to climate change, must in fact be viewed as part of a larger economic development framework — one in which financing mechanisms must be found to accomplish such important environmental tasks. These must include:

- Domestic investments by **all** countries in basic energy and environmental infrastructure, utilizing sound banking, capital access and regulatory institutions that can mobilize public and private resources, and manage their effective use;
- The use of international resources available from foreign direct investment and other private flows of capital, that can result in transferring technology

and knowledge, and contributing to environmentally clean and energy efficient production of economic goods and services;

- Trade in energy and other services, which can benefit countries at all stages of development.

We should always remind ourselves of the threat that climate change is posing, today and tomorrow, to the economic development, agriculture, environment, and social and political stability of nations throughout the world. You can see from IPCC assessments that each year that passes without significant action locks us into increasingly higher global temperatures, which will become more apparent decades later as the oceans slowly respond by rising.

Climate change is a global concern, which requires a global response. While it is widely recognized that CO₂ emissions were mostly originated in developed countries, particularly since the industrial revolution, and thus these countries must take the lead in combating climate change, all nations have a duty to take this global threat seriously and to take appropriate measures, based on their common but differentiated responsibilities, in order to contribute to the ultimate objective of

the Convention on Climate Change. Our children and grandchildren would not forgive absence from global efforts to combat this global phenomenon.

While the Kyoto Protocol is the only multilateral instrument in existence to respond to climate change, Parties to the UNFCCC should also explore more rapid and effective back-up options and initiatives, to deal with global warming including through increased investment in technological development and research on cleaner energies and adaptation. The elements of the civil society can play-and in fact are already playing-a critical role in this global campaign. Partnerships among Governments and between states and non-state actors must be further encouraged for concerted actions. There is no doubt that the eventual action needed will be difficult and costly. However, the future of our planet could depend on the response of the international community to this challenge.

The presence of the Ministers and high-level officials at this Conference of the Parties signifies the importance that your Governments attach to this global concern. The three Ministerial roundtable discussions envisioned during the high-level segment can provide an excellent opportunity for political engagement of the member states to produce political guidance for the ongoing negotiations within the COP, with a view to resolving the outstanding issues. I trust that you will be

able to take the bold decisions necessary to move forward the process launched in Rio de Janeiro and further strengthened in Kyoto. I wish you every success in this important session.