



Republic Of South Africa
Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism

**ADDRESS BY HON R MABUDAFHASI, DEPUTY MINISTER OF
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM ON THE
OCCASION OF THE SIXTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO
THE UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONVENTION**

20 November 2000

www.environment.gov.za
120 Plein Street, Parliament, Cape Town, South Africa
Tel: 27 21 465 7240 Fax: 27 21 465 3216

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SOUTH AFRICA ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIXTH CONFERENCE OF
THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE
CONVENTION, 13-24 NOVEMBER 2000, THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS**

Mr President, Honourable guests, delegates to the Conference

South Africa joins the nations of the world in congratulating you, Mr President, on your election for this all-important Conference. We thank you and the people of the Netherlands for your hospitality, which has been extended to me and my delegation.

COP6 convenes in the context of the impending Earth Summit in 2002, which is poised to craft a concrete plan of action for all countries to achieve sustainable development. Climate Change is a critical element of the long-term goal of sustainable development, which South Africa is pursuing. We expect that these deliberations will result in decisions, which will facilitate the integration of climate change issues into achievement of our national priorities, which include the provision of basic services, economic development and sound environmental management.

As we move towards the tenth anniversary of the first Earth Summit, we hope that the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by all Parties will be a reality by 2002. In this regard, South Africa is pleased to announce that a process towards accession has been initiated.

In the last three years, countries have worked hard to advance the elements of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The outcome of this Conference must be a set of concrete proposals that will see to the practical implementation of this Plan. Concrete proposals will ensure that the momentum that has built up over the past three years is not lost and will result in the successful implementation of the Convention and the Protocol.

In respect of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) South Africa is in favour of an agreement on equity, sound rules and an early start to the CDM. South Africa believes that the adaptation levy on the CDM must also apply to the other two mechanisms. This will increase effective participation of developing countries in the activities of the Convention.

In respect of compliance, it is common knowledge that non-compliance of one Party will affect us all. A strong compliance system is not only imperative for this reason but also to ensure the effective implementation of the Protocol, which allows Annex I Parties a considerable amount of flexibility in order to fulfill their commitments. Such a compliance system should be structured to deter non-compliance while it also remediates the environmental effects of failure to comply. We therefore specifically support the mandatory combination of consequences proposed by the G77 and China.

The recent floods that ravaged Mozambique, the Northern, Eastern and Southern parts of South Africa is only one example of the vulnerability of the African continent. In addition to the potential adverse effects of climate change, South Africa's coal based economy is vulnerable to the impact of response measures to be adopted by Annex I countries. The South African government is proceeding with deliberate speed to extend energy supply to all sectors of society. In so doing, we are committed to an approach that directs society on an energy efficient path utilizing the available abundant natural resources with the assistance of clean technologies.

South Africa, like many other developing countries needs the assistance envisaged in the Convention to achieve the objectives of the Convention as part of our own development priorities.

The Buenos Aires Plan of Action reflects the need to take concrete steps in the area of technology transfer, implementation of Articles 4.8 and 4.9 and capacity building. In this regard, the framework on technology transfer, must allow countries to access appropriate technologies whilst ensuring that they overcome the barriers to sustainable assimilation of these technologies.

Implementation of Articles 4.8 and 4.9 also requires sound frameworks for real action. Both of these items and the overall implementation of the Convention and the Protocol require that the necessary capacities are built consistent with the new challenges that we face. The funding mechanisms required to achieve practical implementation at country level require a clear, simple and transparent system to access the necessary funding.

South Africa is convinced that the majority of nations share our passionate desire for a concrete programme of action as an outcome of this Conference. We are all depending on this concrete outcome as a foundation and input into our national sustainable development programmes. We are disturbed at the lack of progress in respect of capacity building, tech transfer, adverse effects both of climate change and the response measures in the negotiations to date. We urge Parties to energetically tackle these outstanding issues, which relate to additional funding to implement frameworks for capacity building and technology transfer, extending adaptation funding, resourcing capacity building for disaster preparation and early warning systems for extreme weather events.

If we fail to address these issues we will have failed the people of the world, particularly the youth who are watching these deliberations with unprecedented interest. Now is the time for us all to show political leadership and face the challenges that the next few days will bring.

Let us work towards a tangible, action-orientated outcome to collectively mitigate the sometimes-devastating consequences of climate change, particularly in developing countries. This meeting will have succeeded if we can use the next few days to 'work it out' amongst all the nations of the world as aptly captured by the theme of this Conference!

I thank you.

The Hague,
20 November 2000.