

**STATEMENT MADE BY HON. KALONZO MUSYOKA, MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, KENYA.**

Madame Chair,

Kenya has been working with the international community in finding solutions to the problem of climate change. It is against this background that Kenya signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and will be depositing her instrument of accession to the Kyoto Protocol in New York soon.

Our accession to the Protocol has come at a very significant time in my country and the world as my colleague Hon. Prof. Wangari Maathai became a Nobel laureate and I am sure most of you saw her receive her prize last week. This was the least we could do to comply with the Kyoto Protocol.

Science is very clear and the IPCC in their Third Assessment Report state that man is responsible for the warming observed in the last fifty years. In East Africa, Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Kenya are the highest and the second highest mountains in Africa. These two mountains have lost most of their glaciers and are projected to disappear completely within 20 to 30 years. Kenya is a water stressed country and this recession in glaciers is a real threat to our social and economic development.

Furthermore, extreme weather events, which used to be exceptions, are now a norm. We have been affected by recent increases in floods and droughts. Our losses both in terms of human life and property, and effects on the economy have been devastating to say the least. There is emergent spread of malaria in the highland areas in Kenya, places that had never known malaria.

I could go on and on ... loss of biodiversity etc. What I have listed applies to nearly all African countries. To maintain our people with a secure resource base while living in a changing global environment, adaptation is the only way.

Scientifically and politically, adaptation emerges as one of the most urgent and critical issues that the African continent has to prepare for. It is the continent with the least resources and has the least capacity to adapt. Africa needs to be assisted to start implementing projects on adaptation to climate change. Mitigation and adaptation are the main instruments of the framework convention on climate change to achieve the objective of article 2 of the convention. While this roundtable is on mitigation, I could not resist mentioning a thing or two on adaptation because the issue is very dear to Africa.

Turning to mitigation, we are informed that the greenhouse gas emissions of annex 1 parties in 2000 were below their 1990 levels. But this was largely because of the decrease in emissions from annex 1 parties with economies in transition. Annex 1 Parties have to demonstrate leadership by showing real activities that have actually been carried out – activities that can be verified to show the effort they have made in cutting down their emissions. But be that as it may, they were supposed to reach the 1990 target and they have, the next step was the Kyoto Protocol.

We need to recognize the potential contribution of the Kyoto Protocol to the overall objective of the convention is but a first step, the activities under the Protocol are not adequate to make any significant impact on protection of the climate system.

So what are the next steps? This will be very challenging. It has to be linked to very strong political will and commitment by all countries, especially the developed countries. We have to do this together. No country can do it alone.

So how do we continue to further actions to achieve the objective of the convention as stipulated in article 2?

Part of the solution lies in technology and in technology transfer. Many of the African countries have taken major steps that have led to reduction in the growth of their greenhouse gas emissions. The main drivers of these measures are ~~development~~, economic and environmental concerns. It has been shown that there are inherent opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with activities that address sustainable development concerns, while simultaneously supporting the objectives of the convention.

At this point, it may be necessary to remind ourselves the overarching priority of developing countries is sustainable development with poverty reduction as the leading issue. We are working here with definition of sustainable development being “development that meets the needs of the present generation, without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs”. It is a complex balance – sustaining the economic growth that is essential for poverty reduction while using natural resources in a prudent fashion.

The linkages between sustainable development and climate change for developing countries is complex. If there is no concerted global action, climate change could hinder the achievement of sustainable development goals for developing countries.

Developing countries therefore have to be part of the solution for the global climate change solution for both, meeting development priorities and also addressing climate change. In doing this, technology will play a major role. There are however, a number of barriers that prevent access to the requisite technologies, including, among others information, institutional and economic barriers. To address these barriers, developing countries will need to learn from experiences of developed countries through international co-operation, exchange of information, knowledge and how to design policies to help promote new and innovative technologies need not be overemphasised.

In addition, developing countries also look forward to learn more on ancillary benefits associated with mitigation actions and programmes particularly in employment creation in addition to other such benefits.

Finally, while technology holds the key, it seems that access to technology has been left to the CDM and will not benefit many countries in Africa and therefore access to technology would still remain a pipe dream under the convention. The options are simple – make CDM work for Africa, or find other means for Africa to access technologies that Africa needs in order to develop, and develop in a sustainable manner.

Thank you.