

Statement by H. E. Mr. Villu Reiljan,  
Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Estonia  
Third Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change  
Kyoto, 9 December 1997

Distinguished President, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to start my statement with the appreciation of the hospitality of our hosts, Government of Japan, Mayor of Kyoto and people of this marvelous ancient capital of Japan. I trust this warm atmosphere will help us to reach a meaningful solution here in Kyoto, leading us towards the reduction of the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Preservation of the global climate system is our common and shared responsibility. The time is ripe for actions. Estonia is ready to commit itself to substantial legally binding reduction targets in line with the proposal of the European Community. We have considered reduction of emissions of main three greenhouse gases included in a basket, but we are also ready to discuss the inclusion of additional gases. Being a country with the economy in transition dealing with restructuring of our industry, we have additional opportunities for win-win solutions reducing further our greenhouse gases emissions. Our positive experience in implementing projects on activities implemented jointly with our Nordic neighbours, proved to be useful and therefore we are supportive for further elaboration of this mechanism in the frames of the Convention. Emission trading seems to have similar merits as well, but more time is needed to elaborate this ~~innovative tool~~ *instrument* in order to introduce ~~it in a later stage~~.

Distinguished President, in our view only an ambitious legally binding agreement could lead us towards our goal, stabilization and reduction of the level of anthropogenic greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. In order to support the achievement of agreed quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives and make them really operational, the protocol or another legal instrument has to include a list of policies and measures, clearly designed to contribute to reduction of emissions of agreed gases, especially from fuel combustion, industry, transportation sectors as well as enhancement of sinks and encouragement of the use of renewable energy sources. Estonia is rich in forest and peat and has therefore a good potential to switch further to renewable energy sources. Preservation and sustainable use of natural resources is secured in Estonia by the Act on Sustainable Development and the Act on Forests. Therefore we seem to be able to achieve a reasonable balance between the use of renewable energy sources and ensure further enhancement of reservoirs and sinks. We are looking forward to fruitful discussion on net approach.

Distinguished President, mitigation of climate change and its adverse effects is cooperative exercise, which needs involvement of both developed and developing countries. Developed world should make clear its leadership, while most advanced

developing countries should start to take appropriate measures to reverse the trend of their greenhouse gases emissions without delay.

I would conclude my statement with the strong belief that our effort in Kyoto will result in further development and strengthening of international climate regime, with the main aim of preserving our planet to next generations.

Thank you.