



076

55

ITALY

STATEMENT BY
H.E. SENATOR EDO RONCHI
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
OF ITALY

TO THE 4TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

BUENOS AIRES, NOVEMBER 12, 1998

Check against delivery

Madame President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

May I first congratulate the Government of Argentina on hosting the fourth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in beautiful Buenos Aires and thank the Argentinian people for the very warm welcome and extremely kind hospitality.

Minister Bartenstein of Austria took the floor this morning on behalf of the European Union. Italy fully supports his statement.

Madame President,

Almost one year ago in Kyoto I voiced the deep concern of the Italian Government for the terrible damages that the human kind is inflicting upon to the environmental status of the earth. The earth is feverish, I said, its fever increases the temperature of our planet. It puts at risk human lives, important parts of lands, towns of arts.

The dreadful losses brought about this year by the floods in China and in South East Asia and by hurricane Mitch in central America, the countless victims, the millions of homeless, all bear witness of the tragedy that we have to face in confronting climate change.

They call for action now and here. They nail us down to our responsibilities. They hold us accountable for any shortcoming in the results of this Conference. They do not accept remedial action nor marginal decisions. They want from us the full

implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in order to avoid that such disasters will not happen in the years to come.

While conveying once again the solidarity of the Italian Government and people to the populations of those countries who had to pay such a heavy toll, I call for a joint effort of the whole international community. Let us find the right path. Let us adopt the right instruments. Let us make a concerted endeavour to provide the additional financial resources that will be needed. Let us redirect the activity of the International Financial Institutions towards sustainable development.

Building a better world for a better future will be the best tribute that we can pay to the victims and to their families.

Madame President,

Over the time elapsed since the Kyoto Conference Italy did not stand idly by. The Italian Government signed the Kyoto Protocol and prepared the steps necessary for its ratification.

The Italian Government launched the National Plan which will reduce the domestic emissions of greenhouse gases according to the commitments of the Kyoto Protocol.

The Government introduced in the budget law for fiscal year nineteen ninety nine, that will be approved by the Parliament within the end of this year a carbon tax on fossil fuels proportional to their carbon content. The proceedings of this tax will be also used to finance energy saving projects.

In full implementation of its commitment to reduce by 6.5% per cent the 1990 levels of national emissions, Italy will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions from an estimated level of about 621 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent to a level of 519 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by the commitment period 2008-2012.

The National Plan sets out intersectoral policies and measures over the next years and harmonizes them in the framework of a global strategy in order to merge

- regulations and standards towards the best energy saving options;
- voluntary agreements for a rational use of energy;
- economic incentives to promote the increase of energy production from renewable sources as well as to support the diffusion of low emissions biofuels.

The National Plan also provides policies and measures towards the promotion of international cooperation and the transfer of efficient and environmentally sound technologies.

The National Plan focuses on six main actions aimed at:

- increasing the efficiency of electric power production ;
- reducing the energy consumption in the sector of transport ;
- increasing the use of renewables sources for the production of electric power;
- saving consumption of electricity in industrial production, housing and the tertiary sector;

- reducing emissions, inter alia, in waste treatment and chemical processes;
- increasing carbon stocks.

The estimated cost of these six main actions is about sixtythree billions US dollars.

Madame President,

In the life of the Nations, as in the lives of the men, the time comes when one has to look into himself and find the strength to pursue what is right and what is necessary. That time has come.

Thank you, Madame President.