

Statement by Pieter van Geel, State Secretary for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of The Netherlands

(Roundtable 3: Assessment of progress at the national, regional and international levels to fulfil the promise and objective enshrined in the climate change agreements, including the scientific, information, policy and financial aspects. – Chairs: Mr. Fernando Tudela, Mexico and H.E. Mr. Juergen Trittin, Germany)

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Before I start, I would like to express my gratitude to the government of Italy for hosting the ninth conference of Parties to the UNFCCC and for providing the conference facilities.

(Science of climate change and ratification)

Mr. Chairman,

We know that climate change is happening now. Those still questioning human interference in the climate system **simply neglect the state of science** as contained in IPCC's Third Assessment Report. In the long run, only effective mitigation policies will help us to avoid dangerous interference.

That is why the Netherlands has ratified both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. And we haven't waited for the entry-into-force of the Kyoto Protocol to implement both treaties. We will continue to implement climate change policies, **even if the Russian Federation doesn't ratify**. But we trust the Russian Federation will deliver on its global responsibilities.

(NL climate change policies)

Our policies and measures are directed at mitigation and adaptation. We have adopted an energy tax, subsidy programs, fiscal incentives and EU emissions trading designed to reduce emissions of all greenhouse gases. Furthermore, we were one of the first countries to start implementation of **JI and the CDM**. We intend to **purchase 100 million tons of CO₂-reductions with public money**. On adaptation, the Netherlands has geared its **water policy for the twenty-first century** firmly to dealing with sea level rise, flooding rivers and more rainfall.

To assist developing countries, we support capacity building for the CDM through NGOs and the United Nations. On adaptation we support those countries to integrate adaptation into development planning. For instance by supporting them to address adaptation in their national communications, and by supporting the integration of adaptation in risk reduction. **And of course we will contribute our share (17 million) to the 410 million dollar agreed in the Bonn declaration, in accordance with the polluter pays principle.**

(International objective of mitigation)

However, the Netherlands is only one country. The speed at which emissions are increasing worldwide obliges the *entire* international community to step up its efforts without delay. We have no time to lose. In the **coming ten to twenty years we either seize or lose our chances to limit the risks of climate change**. If we want to avoid dangerous human interference in the climate system, the Convention's objective, current climate actions are insufficient. All countries party to the Convention, including those rejecting the Kyoto Protocol, endorse this objective.

The industrialised countries will need to take the lead in further cutting their emissions. The Netherlands is striving to bring about a global regime with a **key target for all industrialised countries, including those who have turned away from the Kyoto protocol, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by – on aggregate – 30% in 2020 compared with 1990.**

(Climate change and development)

Mr. Chairman,

Climate change policy must be part of our sustainable development strategies. We believe that there are many possible policies contributing to development that can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, many developing countries are doing this as we speak. And we should try to maximise these synergies. Some examples:

- **Air quality.** Policies aimed at cleaning our air can also limit emissions of ozone precursors – a very powerful greenhouse gas.
- **Investment policies.** Only 1% of public capital investments in energy supply (by e.g. EBRD and WB) in the 1994-2001 period was directed towards renewable energy.
- **Energy policy.** Many countries are greatly dependent on fossil fuel import, involving billions of dollars. Increasing energy security and

broadening the energy portfolio presents great opportunities to reduce emissions.

- **Sustainable land use.** Efforts aimed at stopping deforestation and increasing the efficiency of agricultural production can go hand-in-hand with preserving carbon stocks.

Mr. Chairman,

I will conclude my intervention with a question:

How can we achieve sustainable energy policies in support of economic development and poverty eradication in developing countries ? Answering that question will be the focus of the conference Energy for Development, that I am organizing at the end of 2004.

Thank you for your attention