

**ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL
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(AALCO)**



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STATEMENT OF HIS EXCELLENCY AMB. DR. WAFIK Z. KAMIL, SECRETARY-GENERAL, ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE TENTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, 17 DECEMBER 2004

Thank you Mr. President,

On behalf of His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Wafik Z. Kamil I would like to deliver the following message:

Mr. President, Hon'ble Ministers, Excellencies, Executive Secretary of the Climate Change Secretariat, distinguished delegates and observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I convey to you the greetings from the forty-seven Member States of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization. The AALCO, as it is practically known in international law circles, brings together, on a Ministerial level, legal experts of two of the most populous regions of the world-Asia and Africa. The Organization, at its successive annual sessions has been following up the developments in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Our Member States recognize that climate change is the most pressing environmental problem today on the international agenda calling for serious and urgent action from the international community and the importance of the UNFCCC process in combating the challenges posed by the problem of climate change.

Mr. President, 2004 marks the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Climate Change Convention. Ten years is not a long period in the march of history, but as far as the achievements of the Convention are concerned, it has certainly left its footprints. The Convention has attained universality and despite setbacks, the path for the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol is firmly in place. We congratulate the international community on this significant achievement, with the recognition of the fact that the Protocol's entry into force, as UN Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan has aptly remarked is the "first essential step in tackling challenges posed by climate change." We also welcome the decision of the Russian Federation to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. This decision has breathed life into the Protocol which was described in some quarters a "dead" one.

Furthermore, we believe that the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, early next year would go a long way in achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention i.e. the "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system".

With this belief, we welcome the impending entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol with the hope that in the further negotiations on climate change it would be ensured that developed countries would meet their initial emission targets while ensuring that sufficient funds are made available to developing countries to allow them to reduce their vulnerability to global warming. We stress that the principle of common but differentiated responsibility should remain the firm basis for the

Convention process and the developed states must bear their primary responsibility for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. President, increased incidence of drought, floods and extreme weather conditions in many regions of the world are a reality today. These extreme weather events hit the developing countries hard and particularly the poor within these countries the hardest. In this direction, we fervently hope that efforts in mitigating the consequences of climate change in developing countries would remain a high priority in the COP process.

It needs to be also recognized that any curbing of greenhouse gases emissions rate in developing countries would affect their growth rate. Therefore, impetus should be provided for financial assistance and technology transfer for moving towards renewable and cleaner sources of energy to developing countries.

Mr. President,

I would draw your attention to the fact that we see new evidence emerging on almost a weekly basis to link rises in man-made carbon di oxide in the atmosphere with the real and immediate threat that global climate change presents to our environment, people and communities. The distressing part in this is that we human beings do not realize that we are together with flora and fauna an integral part of the organic life of the planet and that we ourselves, the human race are disturbing this crucial natural balance, which is essential for, healthy sustenance of life on our planet-Earth. We, human beings cannot escape our responsibility of the wanton destruction of the nature we ourselves have caused, particularly in the post-industrial revolution world, through our changing lifestyle and consumption patterns. The responsibility of the industrialized world in putting the survival of the earth in question is well established and need not be reiterated. Today we have landed ourselves in a situation akin to the story of the monkey cutting the very branch of the tree on which he himself was sitting. Therefore, to save not only the present generation but also to ensure that our future generations inherit from us an environment in which there is a healthy sustenance of life, there is an urgent need for an action from the entire humanity, in a true spirit of global cooperation to curb the rising global emission of greenhouse gases. The time to act and act quickly, within a wide international cooperation, on this planetary challenge is today. Tomorrow may be too late.

Mr. President, AALCO works in close cooperation with the Ministries of Justice and Legal Department of Foreign Affairs of its Member Governments and I would like to assure you of our full support for the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol and all other measures towards strengthening the climate change regime and offer our full cooperation whenever and wherever needed to work in full harmony within our legal framework.

Mr. President, under your able leadership COP-10 through its subsidiary bodies-SBSTA (Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice) and SBI (Subsidiary Body for Implementation) have worked effectively and achieved considerable progress in addressing some of the crucial issues.

Thank you. Mr. President.