

Statement

by

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On behalf of the Environmental Integrity Group
(Lichtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, Switzerland, and
the Republic of Korea)

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Statement by H. E. Dr. Kyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment & Head of Delegation of the Republic of Korea on behalf of the Environmental Integrity Group

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is my great honor and pleasure to be here and address you at this conference where we mark the 10th Anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

On behalf of the 'Environmental Integrity Group' that includes Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, Switzerland and the Republic of Korea, I would like to speak about important issues that should be addressed in order effectively and substantially to mitigate global warming.

Since the adoption of the Convention at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the global community has taken a long, rugged path to tackle global warming.

There were moments when the implementation details of the Convention seemed far from agreement due to conflicting interests of the parties involved.

Thanks to the untiring efforts of the global community, however, the international negotiations gained significant momentum through the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol and the Marrakesh Accords. And now the entry into force of the Protocol is only a couple of months away as Russia has completed its ratification procedures. However, we cannot underestimate challenges yet to be addressed in order to achieve mitigation of global warming in real terms.

Mr. President,

I would like to begin by touching on the issue of the global partnership toward taking the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol forward.

The Convention rests on the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” which means that Parties should work to address the problems of climate change in accordance with their respective capabilities and socio-economic circumstances.

The countries of EIG group including Korea have exerted diverse efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in parallel with their sustainable development, by expediting ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and actively participating in the various collective actions of the global community.

In particular, several country members of our group have shown leadership in preparation and submission of national communications, and we are currently formalizing ways to strengthen our cooperation.

In order to build a broader partnership amongst parties in combating global warming, I believe it is crucial that both the developing and developed countries take efforts for the success of our common global endeavors within the context of each country's own capabilities and the right of sustainable development. New and flexible mechanisms need to be explored to promote wider partnership and understanding amongst parties.

Second, let me turn to technology transfer.

This issue was highlighted at the Round Table session of COP 9. As was indicated at that time, sharing of environmentally sound technology and know-how between developed and developing countries will serve as a pivotal tool for dealing with climate change at the global level.

Technology transfer will take place most effectively if the private sector plays a leading role as they are the ones who hold state-of-the-art technologies for greenhouse gas mitigation. EIG maintains that our discussion on technology transfer should not proceed in a way that leaves technology transfer entirely on the dynamics of the private sector. More focus should be put on the specific roles of governments and the public sector in enabling environments for technology transfer.

Also, I believe it is very important that both developing and developed countries collaborate to research, develop and diffuse cutting-edge renewable energy technologies including hydrogen fuel cells, electric vehicles, wind turbines and photovoltaics:

I expect that continued endeavors will be advanced at the global level for the development and diffusion of new and renewable energy technologies and other environmentally sound technologies.

Third, I will speak about the impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Natural disasters like droughts, floods and heat waves are occurring more and more often in various parts of the globe due to global warming. These phenomena are affecting every aspect of our life including agriculture, water resources and ecosystems.

In order to deal with them, we are in urgent need of adaptation measures as well as more scientific research of climate change impacts and vulnerability. I also reiterate that concerted countermeasures at the regional and the global level should be taken within the near future if we are to adequately and effectively address climate change impacts.

I take this opportunity to call on the IPCC and the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies to suggest concrete strategies for cooperation at the regional and the global level as guidance for developing adaptation measures.

Finally, Mr. President,

The international community after many struggles against challenges and problems is now about to witness the moment of the Kyoto Protocol's entry into force which is a first step into real actions for greenhouse gas stabilization. Now is the time that we once again bring our strength and wisdom together to tackle the challenges ahead. Let us make great strides in our fight against global warming, a mission so important for the existence of mankind.

Thank you.