

STATEMENT
BY
THE HONOURABLE MR PATTESON OTI MP
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE RELATIONS
OF SOLOMON ISLANDS

TO THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION
ON CLIMATE CHANGE, 2-13 NOV 1998, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

MADAM PRESIDENT
HONORABLE MINISTERS
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES

AT THE OUTSET, I HAVE THE HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO BRING TO YOU AS WELL AS THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF ARGENTINA, GREETINGS AND GOOD WISHES FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF SOLOMON ISLANDS, FOR A SUCCESSFUL FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE.

MY DELEGATION BELIEVES THAT, BUENOS AIRES, MEANING 'GOOD AIR', IS VERY APPROPRIATE TO THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE.

THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS SINCERELY HOPE THAT THE OUTCOME OF COP4 WILL REFLECT THE "BUENOS AIRES OF ARGENTINA." THAT WE WILL MOVE FORWARD WITH A COMMON UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION TO ACHIEVE THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE CONVENTION. IN THIS REGARD, ANNEX I PARTIES MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THEIR COMMITMENTS TO STABILISE THEIR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS TO 1990 LEVELS BY THE YEAR 2000 AS STATED IN ARTICLES 4.2 (a) & (b) OF THE CONVENTION. THIS SHOULD BE TAKEN AS THE FIRST CRUCIAL STEP TO FULFILL THEIR COMMITMENTS UNDER THE CONVENTION AND THE KYOTO PROTOCOL. WE MUST STRENGTHEN OUR ACTIONS WITH THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TAKING THE LEAD.

MADAM PRESIDENT

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT IN OUR ATTEMPTS TO AGREE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK AND ARRANGEMENTS AS STIPULATED UNDER THE KYOTO PROTOCOL, WHICH WE BELIEVE IS OUR COMMON OBJECTIVE, OUR DIVERGENT INTERESTS UNFORTUNATELY CONTINUE TO FORESHADOW THAT ONE COMMON GOAL, THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE CONVENTION.

MY DELEGATION THEREFORE CALLS FOR THE EARLIEST RATIFICATION OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL AND URGES ALL PARTIES TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO RATIFY AND IMPLEMENT THE KYOTO PROTOCOL. SOLOMON ISLANDS SIGNED THE PROTOCOL IN SEPTEMBER 1998 AND TO ENSURE EARLY ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROTOCOL, WE WILL RATIFY THE PROTOCOL BY JUNE 1999.

AS OUR COMMITMENT TO GLOBAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS AND ARREST ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES, WE HAVE ENACTED A NUMBER OF LEGISLATIONS IN THE PAST YEAR, THE MOST RECENT BEING ONLY TWO WEEKS AGO WHEN THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT PASSED A NEW ENVIRONMENT LEGISLATION, REQUIRING EXISTING AND NEW INDUSTRIES TO COMPLY WITH STRICT ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS. I AM ALSO PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT MY COUNTRY IS CURRENTLY UNDERTAKING ITS GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY WHICH SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. OUR INITIAL NATIONAL COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE FINALISED AND SUBMITTED BY THE END OF 1999.

MADAM PRESIDENT

CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE MOST CHALLENGING AND IMMINENT THREAT TO OUR EXISTENCE ON THIS PLANET. WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP TO ENSURE THAT OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS ARE NOT DENIED THEIR UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO LIVE HARMONIOUSLY IN THIS WORLD.

HAVING LISTENED TO VARIOUS STATEMENTS MADE AT THIS CONFERENCE OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS, IT IS ENCOURAGING TO HEAR THAT MANY OTHERS EXPRESS THE DESIRE TO SEE THAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES MEET THEIR EMISSION REDUCTION TARGETS IN KEEPING TO THE SPIRIT OF THE CONVENTION AND THE KYOTO PROTOCOL.

THE KYOTO PROTOCOL WAS A SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARDS ENSURING EFFECTIVE GLOBAL ACTION IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE. COP4 MUST NOW WORK TO DEVELOP VERIFIABLE, ENFORCEABLE, EFFECTIVE AND TRANSPARENT ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS THROUGH INVENTORY, MONITORING, RECORDING AND OPERATING REQUIREMENTS.

THESE ARE ESSENTIAL PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF THE PROTOCOLS FLEXIBILITY MECHANISMS AND TO ENSURE THERE IS AN EFFECTIVE REGIME TO ENFORCE COMPLIANCE.

SOLOMON ISLANDS IS A COUNTRY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN AND LIKE OTHER COUNTRIES IN OUR REGION, WE ARE ALREADY EXPERIENCING AND SEEING THE VISIBLE SIGNS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, AMONG OTHERS, DROUGHTS, INCREASED TROPICAL CYCLONE ACTIVITIES, COASTAL EROSION AND CHANGING WEATHER PATTERNS.

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE RESULTING IN CHANGED WEATHER PATTERNS AND ITS ADVERSE EFFECTS IS REAL.

MADAM PRESIDENT

AT THIS JUNCTURE, MY DELEGATION WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ITS SYMPATHY WITH THE GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES OF THE COUNTRIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA PARTICULARLY HONDURAS AND NIGARAGUA WHO IN THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE MITCH ARE FACED WITH THE INSURMMOUNTABLE TASK OF REBUILDING THEIR NATIONS.

MADAM PRESIDENT

MY DELEGATION FULLY SUPPORT THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES OF SAMOA ON BEHALF OF THE ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES, TUVALU, NAURU AND OTHERS BEFORE ME, AND I WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE SOME OF THEM.

THE FLEXIBILITY MECHANISMS AND PRIORITY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE KYOTO PROTOCOL MUST LIE WITH DOMESTIC POLICIES AND MEASURES. THE FLEXIBILITY MECHANISMS ARE TO BE SUPPLEMENTAL TO REAL DOMESTIC ACTIONS. THESE MECHANISMS MUST ALSO RECOGNISE, AS STIPULATED IN ARTICLE 12 OF THE PROTOCOL, THAT FINANCIAL RESOURCES ARE GENERATED BY THESE MECHANISMS TO MEET THE COST OF ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE. IT IS EQUALLY CRITICAL THAT FINANCIAL AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND CAPACITY BUILDING TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, ARE THE PILLARS TO THEIR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION AND EFFORTS TO MEET TO THEIR COMMITMENTS UNDER THE CONVENTION AND THE KYOTO PROTOCOL.

COP4 MUST PRODUCE THE OPERATIONAL MANUALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL OR AT LEAST A TIME FRAME WHEN SUCH OPERATIONAL DETAILS WILL BE COMPLETED. A CLEAR SENSE OF DIRECTION NEEDS TO BE ESTABLISHED *NOW*, IF FURTHER PROGRESS IS TO BE ACHIEVED.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS A COMMON CONCERN FOR ALL OF US, AND IN KEEPING WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMON BUT DIFFERENTIATED RESPONSIBILITIES AND CAPABILITIES, WE MUST INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, TAKE THE COMMITMENT TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE, WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TAKING THE LEAD. WE MUST STRENGTHEN OUR ACTIONS WITH ADEQUATE COMMITMENTS.

MADAM PRESIDENT

TO CONCLUDE MY BRIEF STATEMENT, MY DELEGATION RECALLS DEPARTING KYOTO A YEAR AGO WITH SOME SATISFACTION AND HOPE ON THE OUTCOME OF COP3. HERE IN BUENOS AIRES, MY DELEGATION WOULD LIKE TO DEPART IN THE SAME SPIRIT, AND WE HAVE CONFIDENCE KNOWING THAT UNDER YOUR PRESENT LEADERSHIP MADAM PRESIDENT, YOU WILL ENDEAVOUR TO ENSURE THAT A POSITIVE OUTCOME IS REALISED.

MUCHAS GRACIAS