

The United Nations Framework Convention on
Climate Change (UNFCCC) - the sixth session
of the Conference of the Parties (COP6)

STATEMENT
OF
HER EXCELENCY
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The Hague, Netherlands
13 - 24 November 2000

Mr. President,
Mr. Executive Secretary,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The delegation of Bangladesh deem it a great privilege in participating at the Sixth Conference of Parties (COP6) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), being held at this historic city of The Hague. On behalf of my delegation, I have great pleasure in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your election. I express my gratitude to the people and the Government of the Netherlands for hosting this important event.

Mr. President,

We may recall that the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol laid down the basic principles, such as the precautionary approach, principle of common but differentiated responsibility, principle of equity between North and South and within the South itself, principle of non-discrimination in transfer of finance and technology, etc. The Kyoto Protocol is the first international agreement on global warming that binds a group of nations to commit reductions in greenhouse gas emissions during 2008-2012 at 5% below the level of 1990. But we see that the trend is not encouraging. The emissions of greenhouse gases in the industrial countries are still on the rise. The Annex-1 countries, who are Parties to reductions of greenhouse gases emissions are yet to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. I would like to bring to your notice the specific concerns of countries like ours in this regard.

Mr. President,

As is known, the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol have clear and specific provisions for giving particular attention to the distinct environment and development concerns of the low-lying coastal and small island states. While these two groups of countries contribute least to the Carbon dioxide emissions, they are the most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, such as sea level rise, floods, droughts, cyclones, etc. A one-meter sea-level rise will permanently inundate about 17.5% of landmass of Bangladesh, displacing over 10 million of our population. While the UNFCCC has put more focus on mitigation of climate change, the disadvantaged and most vulnerable nations actually face the challenge more of adaptation to huge disruptions.

Mr. President,

Experiences worldwide have shown that policies and laws have a better chance of proper articulation and implementation under a democratic system of governance. Thus, the Government of Bangladesh under the able leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the illustrious daughter of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has taken a series of initiatives for meeting the challenge of climate change. Because of personal commitment, the Prime Minister herself heads the National Environment Committee, which guides the efforts of strengthening the policy and legal framework for sustainable environment management. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Environment comprising of both Position and Opposition Members review the program and activities on a regular basis. Initial studies on Inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in Bangladesh have already been completed. We are currently in the process of preparing Initial National Communication in this regard.

Mr. President,

We hope that COP6 is going to adopt some very important decisions of how to tackle the threats from human-induced climate change. The main focus would, therefore, be on operationalizing the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), a market-based flexible instrument under the Kyoto Protocol. CDM will provide opportunities for developing projects between the developed and developing countries. We believe that given proper functioning, CDM will greatly contribute to capital and technology transfer, capacity building, job creation and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. However, at the heart of the debate are the issues of financing the projects, level of financing, sharing of emission credits between the Parties, monitoring of the projects, ensuring compliance, etc.

Mr. President,

These are some of the thoughts that my delegation likes to share with you all. We hope our ideas and concerns will get due consideration by this assembly of distinguished environment leaders and experts from all over the world.

Mr. President,

Let this august Meeting under your able leadership help us further consolidate our bonds of cooperation towards protecting our dear planet and our lives. Let our common goal reflect once again the ethos of sustainable development.

Thank you all.