



Republic of Austria

**Statement of H.E. Mrs. Benita Ferrero-Waldner
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs**

**on the occasion of the sixth session of the
Conference of the Parties to the
Framework Convention on Climate Change**

The Hague, 21. November 2000

Check against delivery!

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The decisions we have to take at this 6th Conference of the Parties are crucial for the timely entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. If we work together in a spirit of good faith we can make the results of our work here in The Hague a cornerstone in our common efforts to combat climate change. Progress has already been made on a number of topics; however, various crucial issues still remain unresolved and need our close attention.

We are called upon to ensure the entry into force of the Protocol in 2002 - ten years after the Rio Summit on Environment and Development. Yet, the implementation of the Protocol is only a first step in our pursuit of emission reductions necessary to allow future generations to live in a world worth living in.

Mr. President,

During the following days we have to find solutions for several important and difficult issues and I would like to pay tribute to the personal efforts of President Pronk to guide us in this regard. Ensuring the environmental integrity of the Protocol must guide all our efforts in particular with regard to sinks and the use of the Kyoto Mechanisms.

Real emission reductions have to take place. Making demonstrable progress by 2005 is of utmost importance to show that we are taking our commitments seriously and that we are on the right track. I am pleased to inform you that Austria is undertaking significant steps to finalize and implement its National Climate Strategy. This strategy has been developed by the Austrian government in recent months under the guidance of the environment ministry and with participation of the Austrian provinces and other relevant stakeholders. The strategy underlines our commitment to meeting the Kyoto target primarily by domestic policies and measures, while not excluding a responsible use of the Kyoto mechanisms.

The formulation of rules for these mechanisms is a challenging task. Austria decidedly opposes the use of nuclear energy to generate emission reduction credits from projects within the Clean Development Mechanism and Joint Implementation. As a number of problems relating to its production – such as nuclear waste disposal - remain unresolved, nuclear energy cannot be regarded as a sustainable form of energy production.

Mr. President,

Austria notes that the concerns of countries differ with respect to sinks. We believe that any decision on sinks must not undermine the environmental credibility of the Kyoto Protocol and should provide incentives for sustainable forest management.

Austria shares the common position of the EU not to include sinks in the Clean Development Mechanism during the first commitment period because such projects may cause environmental and social problems.

Mr. President,

We have to find common solutions to our global problems. Close cooperation, in particular, with our partners from developing countries is essential to make COP 6 a success. I can assure you of our willingness to work together with them in a spirit of partnership and solidarity especially with the poorest and most vulnerable to the effects of climate change among these countries. In this regard - while recognizing that there is always room for improvement - Austria appreciates the work done so far by the entity entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism of the Convention. I am furthermore convinced that international cooperation under the Convention and the Protocol will give a new quality to development cooperation, in particular to capacity building and transfer of environmentally sound technology.

Finally, Mr. President

The environmental credibility of the Protocol requires a comprehensive compliance system including binding consequences. Such a system is indispensable to ensure the effective implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in order to make it a viable basis for safeguarding the climate system of our planet.