

**Speech  
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**on the Occasion of the Ministerial Segment of the  
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I am very happy to be here in Buenos Aires. It is a particular pleasure for me that my first duty in the international arena as the new German Minister for the Environment involves climate protection.

The Kyoto Protocol is an important step towards global climate protection. Still, we must continue working on this subject to turn the Protocol into a truly effective instrument geared towards protecting the earth's atmosphere.

Top priority must be assigned to domestic action. The new German government has therefore made climate protection one of its key policy issues. We expressly hold on to our 25 per cent carbon dioxide reduction target by the year 2005 compared to 1990 levels and will implement a comprehensive package of policies and measures to meet this goal.

Our concept is based on three pillars:

Firstly, in the short and medium term, the rational use of energy continues to be a priority. It is our goal to substantially increase energy efficiency in forthcoming years and decades. As a first step last week we launched an ecological tax reform: This reform provides incentives for substantial energy savings in Germany.

Secondly, we will focus on the greater use of renewable energy. In Germany this means in particular using wind, solar and biomass energy.

Thirdly, we strongly push the reduction of non-energy related greenhouse gases in all sectors, particularly waste management, the chemical industry and agriculture.

We have also decided that it is an essential prerequisite for climate protection to phase out nuclear energy. This is a precondition for any energy efficiency strategy and the use of renewables. Various studies show that the continued use of nuclear energy will jeopardise real climate protection. I am therefore not in favour of nuclear energy playing any role in global climate protection.

Internationally, it is essential that we carry on the momentum of Kyoto here in Buenos Aires. Climate protection must remain a top priority on the international agenda. We must continue to further elaborate key elements of the Protocol and work on the implementation of the Convention. This is a matter of safeguarding the world we live in. Rio, Berlin, Geneva, Kyoto and Buenos Aires have only been the first steps in a long march.

In principle, the three mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol could bring about ecological innovation on an economically sound basis, involving all stakeholders in society. However, the use of the mechanisms also entails problems and dangers. Short term economic considerations cannot and must not be the only decisive criteria. It is therefore necessary to first of all establish a stringent and transparent framework. It is essential for us that the three mechanisms are developed in parallel, since a host of linkages and commonalities will be ignored, if a one-sided approach is adopted.

Domestic measures must be the main means to fulfil commitments of industrialised countries. It is them who bear most of the responsibility. For this reason Germany and the European Union have called for the introduction of a concrete and above all quantitative ceiling regarding the use of the three mechanisms. Emissions trends can only be reversed if we take domestic action. Cost-efficient emission reduction potentials, i.e. measures that can be implemented economically, exist in almost all industrialised countries. The IPCC's Second Assessment Report expressly refers to these win-win options.

Industrialised countries must set a clear signal and demonstrate that they are willing to change consumption and production patterns to support climate protection and sustainable development. Only then can we expect developing countries to be willing to take on further obligations in the medium term.

We welcome that many developing countries have already taken effective climate protection measures, in particular measures to increase energy efficiency and promote the use of renewable energies. The review of the Parties commitments as foreseen in the Convention will show whether and to what extent some or all of the Parties are able to contribute to the protection of the world's climate. It should build on an assessment of the concentration levels at which greenhouse gases ultimately need to be stabilised and the time frame over which this should be achieved. We should also think about how non-Annex I Parties can be supported bilaterally or multilaterally when it comes to fulfilling obligations. Technology transfer and capacity building are the catchwords here. Sustainable development and climate protection measures taken by all Parties must go hand in hand. All stakeholders involved, in particular the private sector, will have to contribute to this process.

Global climate protection will only be successful if effective policies and measures are introduced at domestic level. I believe, we should start coordinating domestic activities at international level now. It is very important in this context that we - the Parties to the Protocol - strongly push in the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the International Maritime Organisation for greenhouse gas limitation and reduction measures in the respective sectors.

It is also indispensable to set up a transparent, comprehensive and ambitious compliance regime. This regime must be worked out as a matter of urgency. However, without effective sanctions any compliance regime will be nothing more than a toothless tiger. It is of particular importance for us that only Parties that are bound by the compliance regime be allowed to use the three mechanisms.

I call upon those countries that have not yet signed the Kyoto Protocol to sign as soon as possible. I would also like to stress that the year 2005 will be of special significance for the implementation of the Kyoto decisions. Global climate protection will only be successful if we start implementing our commitments and thus make demonstrable progress by the year 2005.