

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF MINES,
ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM OF ZIMBABWE
HONOURABLE SIMON KHAYA MOYO (MP)
TO THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE
FOURTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA
12 NOVEMBER 1998.

Madam President
Honourable Ministers
Your Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentleman

We all meet here today in Buenos Aires, with one goal in mind, that is, to save mother Earth from destruction by the ravages of climate change. The recent devastating floods in Central America are a reminder to us that we cannot afford to delay action any longer. Climate change is a current rather than an impending disaster and urgent action is required yesterday. The difficulty is that there still exist divergent views on how to achieve this important goal. While we negotiate draft decisions on actions to be taken, climate change continues to take its toll. Minimizing and mitigating climate change is not easy and no good cause is easy to achieve.

Madam President, The Climate change Convention has acknowledged that the bulk of the historical emissions have come from developed countries. The Convention therefore allocates responsibilities in this process according to the important Agenda 21 principle of "Common but Differentiated Responsibilities". Developed country Parties (Annex 1) should take the lead in reducing their Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions while developing country Parties (non-Annex 1) should continue to develop so as to eradicate poverty and improve the quality of life of their populations.

The full implementation of the Convention and the speedy ratification of the Kyoto Protocol can form important first steps by Annex 1 Parties (developed countries) in meeting their obligations. We believe in the equitable participation of all countries in meeting the objective of the Convention on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities. Any attempts to initiate discussion on the need for developing countries to take up quantified emission reduction and limitation commitments, without any demonstrable progress by Annex 1 countries in fulfilling their commitments will only be divisive and will never reach any agreement. This debate will interfere with the success of this Conference of Parties and stall progress on more important matters.

While the Kyoto Protocol if implemented, is an important step towards the fulfillment of the ultimate objective of the Convention, scientific evidence dictates further action. The review of the adequacy of sub-paragraphs (a)

and (b) of paragraph 2 of Article 4 of the Convention is necessary to achieve this objective. This Conference of Parties should decide on the timing and content of future reviews of the adequacy of the commitments by Annex 1 countries as provided for in paragraph 4.2 (d) of the Convention.

Madam President, I wish to remind delegates that the Kyoto Protocol does not replace but supplements the Convention. It is therefore necessary to balance the implementation of the Convention and that of the Kyoto Protocol. Annex 1 countries should invigorate their efforts in meeting their obligations under the Convention. The implementation of Articles 4.8 and 4.9 of the Convention is of particular importance since it will assist non-Annex 1 country Parties to implement their obligations under the Convention. The successful implementation of these Articles will also depend to a large extent on the outcome of discussions on the issues of development and transfer of technology and provision of financial resources. . We believe that effective technology transfer will involve transfer of skills and know-how not only technological hard ware. The Fourth Conference of Parties (COP 4) should therefore come up with a clear plan of action with deadlines, on the implementation of Articles 4.8 and 4.9 of the Convention.

Madam President, the Kyoto Protocol has received more attention than the Convention. There is need to balance the implementation of these two important legal instruments as well as the consideration of the three mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol. The Clean Development Mechanism (C DM) has received the greatest attention to date and we acknowledge its potential for technology transfer, provision of financial resources and capacity building. The various meetings that have been organized on the Clean Development Mechanism have gone a long way in increasing understanding of this important but complex Kyoto mechanism. However, many outstanding issues remain unresolved and we hope that future Conference of Parties (COPs) will be able to resolve these issues. However, it is important to mention that we consider the issue of equitable distribution of Clean Development Mechanism projects as of great importance. Again the issue of capacity building is of critical importance for African countries if they are to benefit from the Clean Development Mechanism. We also subscribe to the view that there will be a need to introduce quantifiable caps on the Clean Development Mechanism and the other mechanisms, in order to ensure that domestic action by Annex 1

countries constitute the principal avenue for meeting commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

Madam President, experience from the pilot phase of the Activities Implemented Jointly (AIJ) is very important for the implementation of the Clean Development Mechanism. However Africa cannot share that experience, hence we are proposing the extension of the pilot phase. We believe the evaluation of AIJ can only be meaningful when all regions have had some experience in these projects.

Madam President, we acknowledge the challenges that we all face in trying to achieve the stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions so as to avert climate change. It is important to acknowledge that we all have a responsibility and let's all faithfully take up those responsibilities in good faith. Let's not lose sight of the fact that human beings are at the centre of all our sustainable development efforts. While looking at global emissions will help in determining stabilization levels for greenhouse gases, examination of per capita emissions will help determine contributions by individual country Parties towards achieving this global goal. The overriding goal should be to improve the quality of life for all people both in developed and developing countries. We all have a right to development and to live in a clean world. Let us, therefore, enter the new millennium with a responsible agenda, for if we cannot manage climate change, the latter will manage us to our collective peril. Together we cannot fail.

I thank you Madam President.