



---

THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF **BHUTAN**  
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION SECRETARIAT

STATEMENT BY  
DASHO NADO RINCHHEN  
DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT

SIXTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES  
(COP6)  
UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION  
ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Hague, The Netherlands

13-24 November 2000

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

At the outset, I wish to extend the warm greetings and good wishes of our sovereign, His Majesty the King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck for the success of this conference. May I also join previous speakers in congratulating Your Excellency, Mr. Jan Pronk, on your election as President of the Sixth Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. My delegation is confident that under your wise and able leadership, our deliberations will be fruitful.

My delegation is happy to note the strong political commitment to the issue of Climate Change and the special needs of the least developed countries by His Excellency Mr. Wim Kok, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. We appreciate the statement made by His Excellency, Mr. Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic, in his positive support for the North South partnership on the climate change issue.

I am pleased to inform this August gathering that our country has just submitted our First National Communications to this Convention with support from the Global Environment Facility. May I take this opportunity to thank all our development partners, both bilateral and multilateral for their support.

The findings of this national inventory highlighted that Bhutan sequestered 3,321 gigagrams of carbon dioxide in 1994, thereby we are not contributing to global emissions of greenhouse gases. Even though we may be the least to blame, our fragile mountainous ecosystems and economies will suffer the devastating effects of climate change. It is critical that such sincere conservation efforts of a least developed country (LDC) should be recognized and supported with the necessary technical and financial assistance in order to enable us to adapt to the potentially devastating impacts of climate change. Our immediate needs are to overcome the lack of data in the fields of meteorology and hydrology and to establish early warning systems for natural disaster management.

We are heartened with the progress made in the implementation of Articles 4.8 and 4.9 of the Convention and matters relating to Article 3.14 of the Kyoto Protocol. We are of the view that adequate attention must be given to meet the needs and concerns of developing country Parties specifically Least Developed Countries (LDCs) arising from the adverse effects of climate change. We also look forward to the implementation of the capacity building framework with special emphasis on the needs of LDCs.

My country is committed to maintaining the "environmental integrity" of the Kyoto Protocol. We fully subscribe to the Executive Secretary, Mr. Michael Zammit Cutajar's criteria for success at COP 6. First, developing country delegates should leave The Hague feeling significantly better off in terms of support for their efforts to address climate change and its impacts. Second, delegations from all Parties should go home convinced that the Kyoto Protocol can be effectively implemented.

In order to effectively implement the Kyoto Protocol, it is important that the LDCs are enabled to participate in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). This will mean that projects that include "emissions avoidance" and "sinks", taking into consideration the issues of permanence and carbon leakage, are included as CDM projects. We also believe that in order to encourage a greater flow of CDM projects to the LDCs and to overcome some of their inherent institutional disadvantages, CDM projects in LDCs should be exempt from an adaptation surcharge.

Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the vulnerability of my country as part of the fragile mountain ecosystems. We feel that the adverse effects of climate change on mountain ecosystems have not received adequate attention within this fora. For those of us living in the mountains, our most serious concerns stem from the threat of glacial lake outbursts. Our glaciers are receding and new lakes are being formed every year.

Only this year in my country, we witnessed floods, the likes of which our country in recent history has never experienced. There were loss of lives and serious social and economic consequences. Our road networks were heavily damaged and closed for an extended period affecting the entire economy. We have stressed the negative impacts of climate change repeatedly on our already fragile mountain ecosystems, at earlier conferences. We would like to once again emphasize the irreversible threats to our water, human health, food production and natural ecosystems.

Mr. President, we feel that the Rio+10 conference in 2002 must be set as the deadline for entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. COP 6 is an important crossroads for the global community, and it is here that we must take the right path towards ensuring a downward trend in emissions, starting with the industrialized countries. Let us face up to our responsibilities! We strongly support all efforts to ensure that the Kyoto Protocol can be effectively implemented and in achieving an environmentally credible outcome, never forgetting our shared obligation to future generations.

Thank you and Tashi Delek!