

Statement by H.E. U Linn Myaing, Head of the Myanmar
Delegation, to the Sixth Session of the Conference of the
Parties, The Hague
(21 November 2000)

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

On behalf of the Myanmar Delegation, allow me to extend our warm congratulations to you on your election as the President of the Sixth Session of the Conference of the Parties. We are confident that under your able guidance, the meeting will be a success. May I also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for hosting this important meeting and for the warm hospitality accorded to us.

Mr. President,

Let me, at the outset, express our deep concern to the problems of climate changes and the adverse effects of global warming. Extreme climate changes can be witnessed in different parts of the world, with some countries facing severe drought while others experience heavy rains, floods, mud-slides and violent storms. The appearance of these extreme climatic conditions reminds us of the need for extraordinary efforts to ensure that we do not provoke changes which would further damage an already fragile environment.

Mr. President,

The Kyoto Protocol adopted three years ago was very timely and took shape amidst reports of serious deterioration in the state of the global environment. We believe that it is important for the Annex-I countries to take the lead and set an example in signing and ratifying the Kyoto Protocol so that necessary policies can be laid down and measures can be taken towards lessening the adverse impact of man-made emissions on climate change. Since the majority of greenhouse gases are found to originate from Annex-I countries, these countries should take the lead in reducing domestic emissions.

We believe that the decisions taken at this conference need to be

acceptable to the Annex-1 countries in order to encourage them towards a quick ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. On the other hand, decisions also need to be made to give necessary assistance to developing countries, especially the LDC's, in order to enhance their capacity building so that they can take part effectively in the process. We hope that all LDC's will benefit from funds from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and that donor countries will provide adequate financial means to assure operations of the GEF.

Myanmar believes that this forum should be the meeting place for overcoming differences between the Annex I countries and developing countries. We hope at this meeting, that some important decisions can be reached which will pave the way for an early ratification of the Kyoto Protocol so that implementation can commence as soon as possible. Although priority should be given to the early entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, equal emphasis should be also accorded to the implementation of the Climate Convention.

Mr. President,

Allow me to briefly mention the efforts Myanmar has been making in the implementation of the Convention on Climate Change. We are well aware of the threat of climate change and attach great importance to the UNFCCC as well as to the Kyoto Protocol. Forests cover fifty percent of the total land area in Myanmar. Nevertheless, we have been planting millions of trees in order to establish forest plantations with the aim of creating more sinks and preventing soil erosion. The programme also covers the protection and rehabilitation of existing degraded national forests, the development of wood-fuel substitutes and the development of water resources.

In Myanmar, a large percentage of the population still has to rely on wood and charcoal as their main source of energy. In order to prevent depletion of forests and also to meet this demand, rural populations are encouraged to plant fast-growing trees to supplement plantations put down by the Government. In addition, the Government is making efforts to promote

the use of biobriquet^{te} and coal briquette in place of fuel-wood and charcoal. Low-cost fuel-efficient stoves are also being developed and distributed throughout the country. Alternative energy sources such as solar and wind energy are also being gradually introduced.

The Government has been carrying out afforestation, reforestation, and special greening projects since 1993-94. The greening project has been undertaken in 13 districts in the Dry Zone and a Dry Zone Greening Department has also been set up to implement the greening programmes. Myanmar's contribution to greenhouse gas concentration is relatively insignificant due to her low level of industrialisation. However, as the country embarks on more industrialisation we need to promote cleaner production. We therefore welcome the transfer of climate-friendly technology that will help us reach that goal.

Mr. President,

In concluding, we would like to mention that since climate change affects the whole of mankind, local, regional as well as international efforts should be stepped up in addressing the issues that concern this matter. We look forward to the successful outcome of this meeting in order to ensure a healthy future environment. Myanmar stands ready to cooperate with all nations to combat climate change and protect the environment, thus ensuring that this whole planet remains habitable for our own generation as well as future generations to come.

Thank you.