



## STATEMENT BY THE NETHERLANDS ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND ITS MEMBER STATES

Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on  
Climate Change  
Tenth session, Buenos Aires, 6–17 December 2004

### Opening Statement High Level Segment

Mr President

The Netherlands, on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, would like to thank you for organizing the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties. The **EU looks forward to an effective political discussion under your guidance**. We will support you in achieving a successful outcome to this COP.

### 10 years FCCC

Mr President, this COP marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**. The Convention was a remarkably swift response to the global risks of man-made climate change. It is the foundation for international cooperation to tackle climate change. **The principles of the Convention have guided our work** over the last decade: the precautionary principle, common but differentiated responsibilities, and the fact that developed countries must take the lead. In 10 years of multilateral action to combat climate change **we have gained invaluable experience** in applying these principles to the implementation of the Convention.

### Kyoto entry into force

**Robust scientific reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change laid the foundations** for increased international action on climate change. On this basis, Parties to the Convention adopted the Kyoto Protocol, one of the most **innovative** Multilateral Environmental Agreements ever negotiated.

Mr President, at this session we welcome the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by the Russian Federation and **celebrate its imminent entry into force** as of 16 February 2005.

### Implementation •

Mr President, the **EU is fully committed to meeting its obligations under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol**. The European Community and its Member States are pressing ahead with climate change policies and measures to deliver results.

The first of January 2005 will mark the start of the EU emissions trading scheme for companies, covering approximately 50% of the EU emissions. And of course, many other instruments and policies are being implemented as we speak. This fosters technological innovation in the EU and we believe this would be possible in other countries as well. Mr President, we urge developed countries which do not intend to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to make **comparable mitigation efforts** during the first commitment period.

#### **Impacts and adaptation**

Mr President, **climate change is already happening and its impacts are evident**. This has recently been emphasized by the climate impact assessment for the Arctic. Climate change is clearly a reality in the Arctic today, and more severe changes are expected in the next decades. Even with significant emission reductions over the coming decades the climate system will continue to change. Worldwide, societies have to prepare for and adapt to its consequences. **The EU will continue to assist developing countries to adapt to adverse effects of climate change, and we reaffirm our commitment to this cooperation.**

#### **The climate change challenge**

Mr President, **current global efforts will not be enough to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system**. We need to accelerate our actions to tackle climate change. The EU is resolved to continue combating climate change under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol and to continue to strengthen the global approach, taking into account common but differentiated responsibilities, and respective capabilities. The EU is of the opinion that to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, overall global annual mean surface temperature increase should not exceed 2°C above pre-industrial levels. If this limit is exceeded, the risks, including of irreversible impacts of climate change would become unacceptably high. 2°C would already imply significant impacts on ecosystems and water resources.

#### **On COP10**

Mr President, the EU welcomes **the progress made so far** at this session, **addressing both sides of the climate change coin, namely adaptation needs of developing countries and mitigation of climate change**. We hope the helpful discussions that were held / are under way on organizing seminars on a post 2012 climate change framework will be led to a fruitful conclusion.

Over the coming days we, ministers from all over the world, will look at our **accomplishments and the future challenges** to combat climate change.

**Global climate change needs a global response**. We have to confront the challenges of climate change, with a view to making a **decisive shift in global emission patterns to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention**. **We must also promote sustainable development and reduce vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change.**

We all share a responsibility to chart the way forward, beyond 2012, within the UN climate change process. Let us return home able to explain to our citizens that we have lived up to this responsibility.

Thank you, Mr President

**Panel 1: 10 years of UNFCCC and the Way Forward**  
**Speaking notes State Secretary Pieter van Geel**

Mr. President,

**Climate change poses one of the most serious threats to our world.** At the same time it is also one of the most complex and difficult international political issues to deal with. In this respect, the entry into force of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was a major achievement: a remarkably swift response to the increasing awareness of the risks of human induced climate change.

We all agree that climate change is a global problem that requires a global response. The Convention is the foundation for addressing climate change in a multilateral framework. It contains a number of **important principles** that guide our efforts, such as the precautionary principle and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Robust scientific reports of the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change** (IPCC) told us that stabilizing industrialised countries' emissions at 1990 levels in 2000 would not be enough. Therefore we adopted **the Kyoto Protocol** in 1997, the next milestone in international climate policy making and the most innovative Multilateral Environmental Agreements ever negotiated. It is with great satisfaction that after the ratification by Russian Federation we now look forward to the Protocol's entry into force on 16 February 2005.

**Mr. President, we welcome and celebrate the progress made. At the same time we must also recognize that further progress is urgently needed.** Our climate is changing quickly as we can see all around us. In Europe, 8 out of 9 glaciers show a significant retreat; and the frequency of extreme weather events, such as droughts, heat waves and floods, have increased significantly over the last decade. The recent climate impact assessment for the Arctic is a clear indication that climate change is a worrying reality around the world. If we do not act decisively the impacts will be severe and possibly irreversible. The poorest countries and the most vulnerable people will be hit hardest. This is illustrated by the recent impacts of extreme weather events in Haiti, the Philippines, and last week's flooding here in Argentina.

Even with significant emission reductions over the coming decades the climate will continue to change. Worldwide, societies have to prepare for and adapt to its consequences. **The EU reaffirms its continued commitment to assisting developing countries to adapt to adverse effects of climate change.** As promised in the "Bonn Political Declaration", the EU will deliver USD 369

million annually by 2005 for assistance to developing countries, including on adaptation through the Special Climate Change Fund and LDC fund.

Mr. President, the EU believes that in order to avoid dangerous climate change global temperature increase needs to be limited to **2°C over pre-industrial levels**, and that such a level should guide our common efforts to combat climate change. Even with the Kyoto Protocol, global emissions will continue to rise. **To avoid dangerous climate change global emissions may have to peak within a couple of decades.** Postponing action will increase the need for adaptation and may even render this impossible. Therefore it is crucial that we deliver on our present commitments and **start considering the necessary future actions to address climate change.**

Developed countries should continue taking the lead in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. The European Community and the Member States remain committed to combating climate change under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol.

However, effective global action also requires increasing mitigation action by **developing countries.** We recognize that sustainable economic and social development and poverty eradication remain key priorities of developing countries. Full account should be taken of their specific needs and special circumstances, in particular of the least developed countries. **We should look for approaches to the climate problem that are supportive of meeting sustainable development policy goals** and contribute to co-operation in other fields, such as the transfer of technology, securing access to food and energy, and reduction of local air pollution.

Mr. President, we have achieved a lot with the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. We should build upon our achievements and invaluable experiences. **We look forward to engaging with all Parties to the Convention in discussions on next steps on our way towards the ultimate objective.**