

**Statement of the Delegation of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
made at the COP6 of the UNFCCC - The Hague, 13 – 24 November 2000**

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

Permit me, Mr. President, to congratulate you on behalf of the Sri Lankan delegation on your election as the President of COP6 at a crucial time of climate change negotiations. We are well aware that your wide experience, wisdom and commitment will help and guide us to reach a successful finality to these negotiations. We also wish to congratulate Mr. Michael Zammit Cutajar, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, and his staff for the excellent work done and wish them every success in their future endeavors.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

Sri Lanka, being an island nation, is well aware of the impacts of climate change. Ours is a low green house gas emitting country, being 80% of the country's power requirements are met from renewable energy sources. Nevertheless, acting as good global citizens, we give high priority to address issues related to climate change which is a global problem. The Government is committed to explore and further promote renewable energy resources and encourage the use of energy efficient appliances. We have also established an Energy Conservation Fund, an Alternative Energy Division and a Climate Change Secretariat to effectively implement UNFCCC in the country. We have already submitted our First National Communication.

We consider the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol as a landmark step taken towards the upliftment of the welfare of mankind. We should not let this step be reversed or slowed down. We are awaiting to build a partnership with the developed nations to achieve our sustainable development goals while assisting them to meet their quantified emission reduction targets through effectively participating in the Clean Development Mechanism. We have launched a successful campaign in Sri Lanka to make the public, senior officials and the political leadership aware of the importance of the Kyoto Protocol. I take this opportunity to thank the UNEP and ADB for the support given in this regard in organizing the international workshop on "Institutional Design and Kyoto Mechanism".

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

I assure you here that Sri Lanka will take all necessary measures to ratify the Kyoto Protocol as early as possible. We consider that the Buenos Aires Plan of Action should be implemented as a package to achieve the aims of UNFCCC. Being a developing country, capacity building, transfer of technology, issues under article 4.8 and 4.9, particularly the adverse impacts of climate change, Land Use, Land Use Changes and Forestry issues are of serious concern to us. We fervently hope that this COP will produce concrete and comprehensive solutions to all these issues.

It is unfortunate, however, to say that the way we negotiated the issues during the past few years reflects clearly our opportunistic tendencies -always passing the ball to the others and, pointing fingers at each other. We do not believe that this approach will take us anywhere in terms of the solutions to climate change issues, since the atmosphere does not understand our politics. While all of us are trying to maximize our individual benefits, the physical phenomenon will continue to occur, without any change in the scale, which has been amply demonstrated by the recent flood disasters in various parts of the world.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

It is time we act positively and speedily. As His Excellency the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands said on Monday "Action is more important than words". Let these words guide us in these noble deliberations. Finally, it is my honor and bouden duty to convey our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for the excellent arrangements made in hosting the Sixth Conference of Parties to UNFCCC in this historic city – The Hague.

Thank you.

N. Pathmanathan
Secretary
Ministry of Forestry and Environment
Sri Lanka