

REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE HARRY I. THOMSON, MP, MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS TO THE SIXTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE HELD AT THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS 13 – 24 NOVEMBER 2000

*Mr. President, Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen.*

It is indeed a great pleasure and honour for me to address this honourable gathering. I wish first of all to extend my sincere congratulations to you Mr. President on your assumption of the high office of president of this very important sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Malawi welcomes the opportunity to work with you and hopes that under your guidance, this Conference shall be a success.

*Mr. President,*

In Kyoto in 1997 we agreed on a protocol to the Convention which is a new mechanism to strengthen the commitments of all Parties to the climate change convention. We are here today to continue negotiating some elements of the protocol which are necessary for the protocol to enter into force. As a Party whose country is vulnerable to the impact of climate change, Malawi looks forward to the entry into force of this Protocol by the year 2001 at the latest.

*Mr. President,*

As we have reiterated in the past during various COP meetings, we would like to see developed countries commit themselves fully to the reduction of greenhouse gases. It is incumbent upon them to vigorously and urgently address climate change issues. Time has indeed come for action. At the same time, *Mr President*, we believe that least developed country Parties should be given the opportunity to develop so as to eradicate poverty and improve the living standards of their people. We are therefore asking Annex I Parties to speed up the negotiations on the remaining crucial issues that are necessary to ensure that the Protocol enters into force.

*Mr. President,*

In Malawi, sustainable and equitable development is now the central objective of the government's overall development policy. This is to be achieved through rapid and sustainable growth that will alleviate poverty while ensuring the sustainable use of the environment and the natural resource base for the benefit of present and future generation. Regrettably, Malawi, like other countries in our region, is being impacted by climate change effects such as *droughts* and *floods* which are having a negative impact on this development policy.

*Mr. President,*

Since ratifying the Climate Change Convention in 1994, Malawi has undertaken several activities in line with the requirements of the Convention. It has prepared its first inventory

of greenhouse gas emissions and conducted a study to determine the vulnerability and adaptability of its ecosystems particularly agriculture, water, forestry and wildlife resources to climate change. This information has now been fully incorporated in our development policies and programs and is being used as a basis for future development plans and strategies. Malawi is now engaged in the preparation of its initial national communication to the Convention that shall be submitted to the Conference of Parties by the end of 2001.

*Mr President,*

We are fully aware that the preparation of national communications is a continuous process and as such, funding for the process should be continuous as well. Several delegations in the past have called upon non-Annex I countries that have submitted their initial communications to embark on their second communications but without any commitment for funding. It has also been noted that many Parties who have yet to prepare their initial communications needed more resources. I would like to believe that this requirement is still valid.

*Mr President,*

On the issue of projects that relate to the Clean Development Mechanism, we believe that if such projects are driven by market forces, the chances that they will come to African countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries, are slim because of inadequate market and other infrastructure. We therefore believe that participation in CDM project activities by developing countries should be equitable at regional and sub-regional level.

On Activities Implemented Jointly, Malawi feels that the pilot phase has still not given African countries enough experience as only a handful of them have benefited so far. We therefore call for an extension of this phase in order to give ourselves enough time to understand and assess the benefits of these projects.

*Mr. President,*

On capacity building and technology transfer, we recognise and appreciate the efforts made so far in financially supporting the participation of delegations from least developed Parties in the negotiations. However, we believe that there are still more areas that require assistance such as funding to countries vulnerable to the impacts of climate change to enable them to adapt to these changes. In this respect, Malawi needs financial assistance to improve its climate observing and early warning systems for weather and climate related natural disasters.

Finally, *Mr. President*, Malawi is an action oriented country and as such, it is our hope that these negotiations will not be a process of meeting old friends, but that an action process will follow the negotiations. More specifically, *Mr. President*, this action should be for the good of the global climate and for the under privileged.

Mr. President, I thank you.