

Opening Remarks of the Seoul Pre-COP 18
The Shilla Seoul Hotel, Seoul, Republic of Korea
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H.E. Yoo, Young Sook
Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea

Honorable Prime Minister of Republic of Korea Kim, Hwang Sik,
Your Excellency Abdulah Bin Hammad Al-Attiyah, President-designated of COP 18
and CMP 8,
Executive Secretary of UNFCCC, Ms. Christiana Figueres,
Ministers, distinguished guests,

Good Morning, I am Yoo, Young Sook, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea.

First of all, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all of you for sparing your precious time to visit Korea and to participate in Seoul Pre-COP ministerial meeting. Welcome to Korea.

When it comes to talk about climate change, this is the very first time for such a distinguished group of participants at ministerial level from all across the world to gather here in Korea. In this regard, as Korean Minister of Environment, it is a great honor to serve you here in Seoul.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am sure all of you recognize the significance of the year 2012, in the global climate change negotiation. I believe 2012 is the year to examine the past and present of climate change talks, and design its future.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of UNFCCC, and the 15th anniversary of the Kyoto Protocol. This year, we must ensure successful closure of the 1st

commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, and smooth transition into its 2nd commitment period. By moving ahead with the Durban Platform, this year, we must also continue to plan on the post-2020 negotiation.

Since the birth of UNFCCC at the Rio Summit in 1992, 20 years has already passed. If it were a human, it would be a young man, who is about to go out there into the broader world and make his mark.

I believe there are 3 crucial elements necessary for a young man to do that: First, Vision to picture his future, Second, passion and commitment to realize such vision, and third, spirit of challenge and change.

With a parent's heart, we need to give our best support to this young man, UNFCCC, so that he can develop and mature himself into a sound member of global society and picture a bright future.

For UNFCCC to examine the past and present of our climate change response and design its future, I do believe it needs a strong leadership, one that sets a clear vision, articulates on it, and drives it to its completion.

That is precisely what all of us, Ministers and vice ministers from across the globe, must show at this meeting.

Without a doubt, there must also be challenges ahead of this young man. The global financial crisis and widening mitigation gap are some of many challenges that he must overcome.

A great poet of Germany, Goethe, said when we treat man as he is, we make him worse than he is. However, when we treat him as if he already were what he potentially could be, we make him what he should be. If we show this man that we are passionate and committed to what he can do, he can meet his challenge, and make the change.

Distinguished participants,

In the next two days, we will start laying the groundwork to draw successful outcome in Doha.

Our task at Doha is to complete the 1st commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and make a transition to its 2nd commitment period, and discuss on the pre-2020 and post-2020 ambition, to enrich the contents in Doha as much as we can.

What we must pursue is not an ordinary, everyday outcome. What we must do is to take an inclusive and balanced approach, to deepen our understanding on different perspectives. Please show your commitments and leadership at Pre-COP ministerial meeting as well as COP18.

I would like to conclude my remarks with a confucian saying. "When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't adjust the goals, adjust the action steps."

Ministers, Excellencies, and colleagues,

Now is the time to turn the challenges we face into change for the better. Now is the time for us to take our action. Let us meet the challenge, make the change, and move forward with our action.

Thank you very much.