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Statement by Ms. Keit Pentus, Minister of the Environment of Estonia at the 17th Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and 7th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

Madam president, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

First of all, it is a great pleasure to be back in this exciting country. My first visit to South Africa took place a year ago, when I was lucky to see the South African national football team play at the world cup. I hope that our team, and I mean all the parties, will show similar team spirit.

To start with, I will shortly come back to the point made by President Zuma yesterday. He summarized the frustration many countries feel today. That the situation we face seem to be unfair: while the developed countries of today were allowed certain practicies, the same practicies are now denied to others.

I understand this feeling of frustration. 20 years ago, Estonia, mu country, had recently regained its independence from soviet occupation, our economy was in tatters and our environment damaged by years of neglect. For 50 years we had been cut away from democracy and isolated from the international community. But in the space of 20 years we have managed to build a country with a functioning democracy, fast growing economy, fiscal policy that is the envy of other EU members, a country where public services are available for all online and environmental protection is standing in strong feet.

We managed that because while looking at developed countries as role models, we found our own way. We avoided some stages and thanks to that, also some mistakes. We built a country to be proud of, because 20 years ago we saw not only difficulties, but an opportunity. Opportunity to do whats right and whats best for our people. I encourage everyone facing difficulties today to see fighting climate change not only as a challenge, but as an opportunity.

An opportunity to do things in a better, cleverer and more sustainable way, keeping in mind your countries' long term interests.

I am convinced that in the future, the winners are not the countries with the biggest emmissions, but the countries who manage to use their resources in the most efficient way. T h e y will be the stars

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of the new, greener economy.

Coming from a tiny country with 1.3 million people, I am very well aware of the need to achieve our goals together. As many others have said, this is a global problem and cannot be solved by one or a few countries.

But this unity is also important so that everybody understands the gravity of the situation, that we don't leave the doubters room to doubt.

And the unity is important so that none feels that their efforts are futile, because while they are doing their best, others stand aside. Therefore I urge the big economies to remember the need to show the leadership. With power comes responsibility.

It is clear that an ambitious international regime to combat climate change is crucial if we are to reach the agreed objective of maximum 2°C increase of global temperatures. The rules based, transparent and balanced outcome here in Durban is essential, building upon what was agreed last year in Cancun and solving outstanding issues.

It is urgent to agree on a process towards a comprehensive legally binding framework and a clear time line, ensuring global participation. Our preference is single global and comprehensive legally-binding agreement. As time is passing and negotiations are not so far yet, Estonia is open to a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol as part of a transition to wider framework when certain conditions are met to guarantee environmental integrity. There is a clear need to strengthen the environmental integrity within new global climate change framework. Here in Durban we have had many constructive discussions, as my country have large forest coverage, questions relating to forest management and LULUCF are very important to us.

Madame President, Estonia is committed in fight with climate change. As a part of European Union we have already some years ago taken legally binding commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in period 2013-2020 in different economic sectors. We are implementing European emission trading scheme, in addition we have several measures in place and under preparation to reduce emissions. Improving energy efficiency and energy savings while reducing energy consumption are just few priorities for my country. We have domestic measures for public and private houses renovation in light of energy savings. In transportation sector finding alternative energy sources is most important and we are working to have full coverage of electric vehicle

charging stations by the end of 2012.

We are ready to give our fare share but climate change needs much more. All Parties have to be engaged. Estonia has promised to participate in fast start finance as a part of EU contribution for supporting developing countries to adapt to climate change. Part of this contribution will be made under European Commission initiative Global Climate Change Alliance to support adaptation in Bhutan. Despite the difficult economic situation the EU has all together mobilised 4,68 bilion euro so far in fast start finance and is on track to meet its commitment of 7,2 bilion euro for the full period. But this is not enough. Adequate long term finance have to be in place to ensure the transitioning to a low-carbon economy and society. It is agreed in European Council several times that our objective is, in the context of necessary reductions according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change by developed countries as a group, to reduce emissions by 80-95% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels. We are still far from achieving this. Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period is not enough for this.

Madame president, I hope we can deliver in Durban.

Thank you.