



ZIMBABWE

SPEECH

BY

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, WATER AND CLIMATE

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AT

COP 19 AND CMP 9

WEDNESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2013

WARSAW, POLAND

Your Excellency Mr. Marcin Korolec, President of COP 19,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you Mr President, on your election as President of COP 19 and CMP 9. My delegation is confident that with you presiding over this Conference, we will be able to reach a successful outcome this week. Allow me on behalf of my delegation to express our appreciation and gratitude to the Government and people of Poland for their hospitality and warm welcome to this beautiful city of Warsaw. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for their excellent arrangements.

Zimbabwe aligns itself with the statements made by Swaziland on behalf of the Africa Group and Fiji on behalf of the G77 and China.

Mr President,

Zimbabwe and most of Africa continue to face numerous severe negative impacts arising from the adverse effects of climate change.

In our part of the world, we are observing and experiencing increases in frequency and intensity of cyclones, flooding, droughts and gradual expansion of deserts in the sub region.

These adverse effects threaten the sustainable development, livelihoods and the very existence of many of our people. Such impacts are hampering the region's and indeed my country's efforts to achieve the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Moreover, my country has already experienced drastic changes in weather patterns which have and continue to adversely affect various sectors of the economy, particularly agriculture, water and health. Agriculture is the backbone of Zimbabwe's economy, providing raw materials for the industrial sector and supporting seventy percent of Zimbabwe's population.

Mr President, Agriculture is the source of livelihood for people living in communal and resettlement areas, among them women and children. It is a means of survival for our people. This is why Zimbabwe believes that agriculture be treated as an adaptation issue under these negotiations.

Mr President

Zimbabwe has been meeting her obligations under the Convention. Zimbabwe was among the first few countries to submit the Initial National Communication to the COP. At this moment, my country is working on the Third National Communication.

The findings from various assessments in the Second National Communication have clearly demonstrated the need for a coordinated approach to handling climate change issues. As a result, the country is now in the process of concluding development of the National Climate Change Response Strategy, which will be launched in the first quarter of 2014.

Mr President,

We are all agreed that climate change is a global challenge that requires urgent international action and response. All Parties have a responsibility in Poland to increase the momentum to address climate change concerns, with particular reference to work towards a new climate change regime.

My delegation shares the view that efforts to address climate change, should be in a manner that enhances sustainable development and sustained low carbon economic growth of our countries and the universal elimination of poverty, hunger and disease.

All three pillars of sustainable development (economic development, social development and environmental protection) should be addressed in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner. In addition, decisions on climate change should fulfill the commitments undertaken at the Rio +20 Summit and premised on the principles of the Convention.

Mr President,

Zimbabwe is deeply concerned by the slow progress of negotiations, particularly the delays caused by some from the developed country Parties on various issues. Without effective mitigation and adaptation, all efforts to address climate change will be fruitless.

Developed countries have a specific leadership responsibility of instituting deeper cuts in greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the commitments made under the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.

Once this is achieved, we in the developing countries will also design ways of complementing these efforts.

We are of the view that the lack of fulfillment by developed countries of their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol is one of the formidable challenges in tackling climate change. This, complimented with unfulfilled pledges for fast-start financing, brings about mistrust amongst us, developing and developed.

Zimbabwe therefore joins others in urging Annex I Parties to show leadership through raising their level of ambition in emissions reduction targets to the scale required by science and equity under the Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol and also to provide adequate financing for adaptation in developing countries.

Mr President

When is the world going to take climate change very seriously? How many people should have perished because of climate change? How much in terms of economic losses should we have registered? We have those Annex 1 Parties who are not part to the Kyoto Protocol, are these Parties leaving in the same world with the rest of us?

I would like to appeal to these Parties to be sympathetic with what is happening across the world in terms of climate change related disasters and take up comparable commitments in magnitude and effort to other Annex I countries that are leaving on this earth. These, of course, should be commitments that are Measurable, Reportable and Verifiable.

Mr President,

Adaptation is key for us to respond to climate change and to build the resilience for our communities. Zimbabwe calls upon developed countries to provide the means of implementation including new and additional finance, technology transfer and capacity building. At this COP, we should agree and conclude the long-term finance agenda with developed countries guaranteeing scaled up climate financing up to and beyond 2020.

Mr President,

As Parties move forward with negotiations for a future climate change agreement, Zimbabwe categorically rejects attempts by developed countries to shift responsibilities of addressing climate change mitigation and its adverse effects to developing countries. We once again urge Annex 1 Parties to show leadership and implement their obligations as we tackle this global challenge.

It is clear that there is an urgent need for building the resilience of countries to natural disasters and early warning systems to prevent and reduce the adverse impacts of climate change.

In conclusion, Mr President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, Zimbabwe would be very happy to see a Warsaw Pact on Climate Change coming out of this conference. A successful outcome from Warsaw will contribute towards creating a safer environment on our beautiful earth. The Zimbabwean delegation is willing to work with you and other Parties to achieve a successful and balanced outcome at this Conference.

I thank you all
