



**The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Bamako, 15 September 2011**

**Statement by Richard Kinley, Deputy Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the UNFCCC's Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres, I am honoured to address this important meeting of the African Ministers of Environment. Ms. Figueres deeply regrets not being here in person, but scheduling conflicts have made it impossible.

You meet here less than three months before the UN Climate Change Conference takes place under African skies at the end of the year. As you know all too well, the Durban conference is a critically important step on the road to a fully-fledged global climate regime.

To be frank: this year's agenda is complex and complicated and needs to address a range of key highly political issues on which there are fundamentally differing positions among Governments. Fitting all the pieces, and positions, together is not going to be easy. But I know the incoming South African presidency is fully committed to doing so.

Yet as Africans, throughout your history, you have often overcome the seemingly impossible. From the lands of southern Africa, and in the language of the Nguni, comes the concept of "Ubuntu", which says that we are all locked into interdependence with each other. Acting in the spirit of "Ubuntu", in other words, by living the interdependence through participation and sharing in view of the greater good for all, we reach our humanness.¹

Indeed, climate change exemplifies this global interdependence. Yet given the diverse world that we live in, it also exemplifies the need for compromise in advancing climate change solutions. And the need for compromise by all will be most pressing in Durban.

As one of the most vulnerable regions to the impacts of climate change, yet as a region that has made great development strides and stands ready to progress even more, Africa has a lot to gain from a successful conference in Durban.

But what must Durban achieve to move towards a fully fledged global climate regime in a meaningful way?

The UN Climate Change Conference needs to advance four broad goals, goals that ministers may eventually be called upon to help attain:

¹ Desmond Tutu

- It needs to resolve the status of mitigation pledges, the open political question over the Kyoto Protocol, as well as the nature of the global regime going forward;
- It needs to establish the contours and methodologies for the adequacy review for the global temperature limit, which will be carried out from 2013 to 2015;
- It needs to launch the Green Climate Fund and identify options on how to ramp up the agreed climate finance of USD 100 billion per year by 2020 for adaptation and for mitigation; and
- It needs to deliver clear implementation plans towards operationalizing in 2012 the new technology and adaptation institutions that were agreed in Cancun. The newly created Standing Committee also needs to be launched in Durban.

Allow me to elaborate somewhat on each of these.

1. The status of mitigation pledges, the Kyoto Protocol and the nature of the global regime going forward.

I am aware that these issues are of utmost importance to Africa's negotiators. So what have been the developments on these issues since Cancun?

In Cancun, Governments committed to reducing emissions in order to keep global average temperature increases to below 2 degrees Celsius. Governments also made their emission reduction commitments and actions official in Cancun. Yet subsequent assessments have revealed that these commitments and actions only amount to 60 percent of what is needed to keep average temperature increases to below 2 degrees. This means that more urgent action is required.

Additionally, although the mitigation commitments and actions were made official in Cancun, they have not yet been formally anchored in the UNFCCC process. This needs to happen in Durban, while ensuring that the current insufficient level of ambition is not locked in.

Under the Kyoto Protocol, negotiations are beginning to work against the clock. With the end of the first commitment period almost in sight, and the urgent need to ensure that pledges will be met, there is an urgent need to find a viable way forward in Durban. Within the negotiations, there is currently a large measure of uncertainty on how this should be handled.

Many Governments want targets for developed countries to be inscribed in a new second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol. Some developed countries are open towards a second commitment period, provided that certain conditions are met. Others have indicated that they are opposed to this option and rather want to see mitigation commitments and actions formally anchored and monitored in a new mitigation framework under the Climate Change Convention.

A mitigation framework under the Convention is evolving, but needs more time to be sufficiently detailed in terms of legal status, transparency, monitoring and accountability before it can become operational.

Yet in the possible absence of the Kyoto Protocol, we are fast moving into a phase in which the world will be entirely without a fully functional, accountability-based international mitigation framework. Additionally, a lack of orientation after 2012 will have negative implications for the carbon market and related mechanisms and institutions.

To be a success, Durban needs to address further commitments of developed countries under the Kyoto Protocol *and* the evolution of the mitigation framework under the Convention, while ensuring the differentiated participation of developing countries. Realistically, and out of necessity, this may need to involve interim arrangements.

Some Governments have indicated that such interim arrangements include a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol. Others do not have this view, and still others have begun speaking about some transitional or political bridge.

Finding a workable way forward in this complexity is the defining issue of the Durban conference.

2. The adequacy review

In Cancun, Governments agreed to review the adequacy of keeping global temperature increases to below 2 degrees, including in relation to a 1.5 degree increase. The review, set to take place between 2013 and 2015, is the international community's commitment to establish a near-term reality check on whether it is on track towards meeting its goals. In Durban, Governments need to decide on the "what" and the "how" of the review.

3. The Green Climate Fund

The Green Climate Fund was created in Cancun in view of assisting developing countries in their adaptation and mitigation actions. To this end, it was agreed that a significant share of the new multilateral funding for adaptation should flow through the Green Climate Fund.

Since Cancun, Governments have worked hard to design the fund and to develop its institutional, governance and disbursement structures. At the same time, there is insufficient clarity on how the agreed USD 100 billion will be mobilized, as well as whether some interim options may be required while the funding is being ramped up.

As a result, success in Durban needs to include the following:

- A clear commitment to a prompt start of the fund, possibly with pledges from donors for the initial expenses of the fund;
- A political commitment to ramp up the availability of funds from 2012, ideally together with a commitment to also ramp up mitigation and adaptation action; and
- A clear way forward regarding work on options to mobilize the USD 100 billion by 2020.

4. Lastly, the newly created institutions

Governments need to deliver tangible advances towards the full operationalization of the Adaptation Committee, the Technology Mechanism and the finance Standing Committee.

The prompt start of the Adaptation Committee is a key deliverable for Durban. Additionally, given the urgent adaptation needs of developing countries, particularly African countries which suffer significant climate vulnerability, another important Durban deliverable concerns the launch of modalities and guidelines to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans.

On the technology mechanism, a successful outcome in Durban needs to entail a clear road map for the full operationalization of the mechanism in 2012. As part of this, the mechanism's implementation arm, the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), needs to be launched and a process for selecting the location of the CTCN needs to be established.

For both adaptation and technology, success in Durban also needs to entail clarity on how financing arrangements will be linked up with these new institutions.

These are the broad areas that need to be significantly advanced, as part of a much wider basket of issues, in order to make Durban the success that the world needs. Importantly, such advances are what Africa needs to assist the continent in coping with impacts and in developing in a climate-friendly way.

Politics is the art of the possible. I would encourage Africa to use its negotiating weight to try to raise the bar and achieve a big step forward in Durban, but to be mindful of the risks of any "all or nothing" negotiating strategy. The world, and Africa, cannot afford a failure in Durban.

The upcoming negotiating session in Panama at the end of September, beginning October, the last before Durban, presents an important opportunity to prepare for the COP and to begin working on text that could be adopted.

According to the great Desmond Tutu, ubuntu means that we can only overcome the great problems of the world if we act from within the unity of our interdependence.

In the context of the Durban conference, this alludes to the importance of compromise in the interest of taking the negotiations forward. And in view of Ubuntu's "greater good for all", there may be more opportunities in going along with the good rather than insisting on the perfect.

As the custodians of this African philosophy, I urge you to contribute your part towards letting the UN Climate Change Conference take place in the spirit of Ubuntu.

Thank you.
