



**Seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 17)
and the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties
serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 7)
Durban, 6 December 2011**

**Opening address at the high-level segment by
Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

H.E. Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa
H.E. Mr. BAN Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations
Most honourable Heads of State and/or Government
H.E. Ms. Nkoana-Mashabane, President of COP 17/CMP 7
Honourable ministers
Excellencies
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the opening of the high-level segment of COP 17/CMP 7.

At the outset, allow me to once again express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the city of Durban and the Government and people of South Africa, for having welcomed us with open arms and hearts and for having given us excellent conference facilities.

Honourable ministers, during the course of the past eight days, your delegates have achieved good progress on a number of issues, in particular on support for developing countries, including:

- National adaptation plans, the Nairobi work programme for promoting adaptation actions and a work programme on loss and damage from climate change impacts;
- The Green Climate Fund;
- The conditions for safely supporting the reductions of emissions from deforestation;
- The governing arrangements for the Technology Mechanism;
- Further progress on monitoring, reporting and verification;
- And increasing clarity on how to take forward the review.

While not yet complete, with this progress, I am confident that the outcome of the Durban conference can fully operationalize the Cancun Agreements.

At the same time, there are a number of issues in which progress has been made, but that still require some guidance from ministers. You will be briefed on these by the COP President and the Chairs this evening.

Concurrently, there are issues that require not only your guidance, but your active engagement. Excellencies, the time has come to address the thorny political issues before us.

These issues are not new. They concern reliable long-term funding, the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and the future of the mitigation framework under the Convention.

One of the great figures of South Africa's history, Walter Sisulu, once said: "It is a law of life, that problems arise when conditions are there for their solution."

Delegates have steadily advanced in creating those conditions during the past week. But it is now for you, ministers, to craft the solutions.

Those solutions will be the outcome from this conference and they need to ensure that:

- There is clarity on the contours of a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and that an implementation gap is ruled out;
- There is clarity on how to achieve strong rules-based rigour and structure in the global effort to tackle climate change going forward;
- There is clarity on how to avoid an ambition gap;
- And that there is clarity on how funds will be scaled up from now until 2020.

During your opening address last week, President Zuma, you observed that delegates carried solutions on their faces.

You were right. Some operational solutions have already been tabled. With the arrival of Heads of State and/or Government and ministers, I am confident that you and the Secretary-General also see solutions on those new faces here today.

Because, Excellencies:

- The vulnerable need solutions from you;
- And future generations need a visionary legacy from you.

Thank you.
