



**Ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9)
Milan, 10 December 2003**

**Statement at the high-level segment by Joke Waller-Hunter
Executive Secretary,
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the high-level segment of the Ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC.

At the outset of this high-level segment, allow me to ask the question: how will COP 9 be remembered?

Part of the answer is known from the achievements in the first ten days:

COP 9 will be remembered because the link between climate change and sustainable development has been tightened, in follow-up to the Delhi Declaration adopted at COP 8.

COP 9 will also be remembered because it recognized that the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has become operational in the record time of two years, and we expect the first projects to be registered early next year. This shows, in my view, that when the commitment and the political will are there, it is possible to set up a sound institutional framework for real action. It also shows that partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders, key in realizing the CDM, are feasible. We witness the same in the area of technology, where the process is steadily moving to practical action.

COP 9 will be remembered as the forestry COP because of the real progress achieved in developing the CDM afforestation and reforestation guidelines that will provide a sound and credible foundation for projects, as well as the common reporting format and the good practice guidance which will launch an era of better forest data in national inventories as a basis for better decisions in the future.

COP 9 will also be remembered because the SBSTA took an initial step in developing a new agenda for its work, an agenda that pays equal attention to mitigation and adaptation. It cannot be repeated often enough: a sound methodological basis and sound monitoring of performance are essential prerequisites for sound decision-making .

Conditions have been created to make national communications by developing countries a strategic tool for integrating climate change policies and programmes in planning for sustainable development. Capacity-building is an essential component of virtually all

decisions, including in the area of climate observation systems, where activities were given a major boost at this COP.

We will hear later this morning statements by the Heads of United Nations organizations and conventions. The discussions at this COP strongly confirm that we must join hands to deliver. This is easily said, but maybe not always so easily done.

Mr. President, I have painted, with a very broad brush, a picture of how far we have come since the opening of COP 9. We have also provided Ministers with a brochure that, independently of the COP agenda, gives some facts and figures on climate change and our process.

Had I expected more? Maybe. This COP has clearly showed difficulties in making progress in implementing some decisions taken in the past. Old debates have been reopened, instead of jointly moving forward. We must be careful not to lose the good will of so many who stand ready to deliver on the implementation or the further development of the Convention, or to lose sight of the fact that as we discuss formulations of agenda items, concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere continue to rise.

But COP 9 is not over yet. Now it is up to the high-level segment to complete the answer to my question: how will COP 9 be remembered?

The round-table discussions provide a unique opportunity to express political commitment to global, multilateral action, despite the regrettable uncertainty on the timing of the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. They can provide the vision upon which further action can be based. Much can be done today. But much more still needs to be done, because the overall emission projections based on today's data are not encouraging, and will not allow us to meet the long-term objective of the Convention. The world is looking to you to be reassured that climate change will not threaten social and economic progress over time.

Finally, Mr. President, one part of the answer to my question is uncontested: COP 9 will be remembered because it was held in Milan, in Italy. I thank the Government of Italy, the Regione Lombardia and the Province and City of Milan for the very warm hospitality extended to the 5500 participants in COP 9.
