



Statement

by

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High-level Segment

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to the

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

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Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the past decade, OPEC and its Member Countries have taken a keen and active interest in the ongoing climate change negotiations.

This is because, like other countries, we seek to create a cleaner, healthier and safer world in which to live, and to do this in a manner which is consistent with sustainable development, from which present and future generations worldwide will benefit.

We recognise that, as fossil fuel producers from the developing world, we can make an important contribution to the course of these negotiations, which are wide-ranging and complex in scope.

We welcomed the inclusion of the climate change issue into the discussions at the World Summit in Johannesburg, which focused on the objectives of poverty eradication and the promotion of economic development, in harmony with social development and the protection of the environment.

Access to advanced forms of energy services has a central role to play in achieving these objectives.

However, while there is the understandable call to develop renewables, the fact remains that the technology is still in its infancy. Therefore, while the renewable energy industry is being developed, all other available resources, which are friendly to the environment, must also be accessed, enhanced and utilised to tackle the dire problems of mankind and ensure sustainable development.

Petroleum will feature prominently in this. Advances in technology continue to make oil and gas cleaner fuels. The successful development of carbon dioxide sequestration technology will ensure that fossil fuels, including oil, continue to serve the needs of mankind for the foreseeable future.

As the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change assesses the realities of implementing the Kyoto Protocol, we remind it of the need to do this in a way which avoids a net detrimental impact on fossil fuel producers — in accordance with Article 4.8 of the Framework Convention and Articles 2.3 and 3.14 of the Kyoto Protocol.

We also remind it of Article 4.9, which stipulates that adequate provision should be made for the transfer of technology and funding to the poorer countries of the world; this will enable them to develop their backward economies in a sustainable manner and in full harmony with the needs of the environment.

It should be stressed here that poorer nations have the same rights as richer nations to all the necessary support and funding for research into climate change issues, and that every effort should be made to ensure that this happens at all times.

Moreover, we need to keep our focus firmly on the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”. Industrialised countries, whose activities over decades — and even centuries — have been responsible for the lion’s share of adverse impacts on the environment, should recognise and honour their obligation to provide the lion’s share of the response measures.

Finally, as I said earlier, the whole issue of climate change is a complex one. But the benefits are simple, since we all stand to gain from making the world a cleaner, healthier and safer place to live in.

Thank you.