



FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE - Secretariat

CONVENTION - CADRE SUR LES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES - Secrétariat

For use of the media only;
not an official document.

PRESS RELEASE

Climate change talks enter final phase

Bonn, 16 June 2000 – Negotiators from 153 countries are concluding a round of talks here today after making steady progress on arrangements for cutting developed country emissions of greenhouse gases and for supporting the fuller engagement of developing countries in climate change action.

“The emergence of negotiating texts here and the growing involvement of ministers indicate that the talks are moving from detailed technical matters to core political issues,” said Michael Zammit Cutajar, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Climate Change Convention.

“There is still a great deal of work to do, however. Political leaders world-wide now need to get fully engaged in finalizing an international strategy on global warming over the next five months if we are to have an effective agreement in November at The Hague climate change conference,” he said.

A promising sign of increasing high-level political engagement is that the next and final set of preparatory meetings in Lyon, France, are to be formally opened by French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin. The 11 – 15 September Lyon meetings must finalize as many issues as possible to leave time for a comprehensive political deal in The Hague.

The Hague meeting, known as the Sixth Session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention (COP 6), will take place from 13 – 24 November. It is expected to draw 5,000 to 10,000 participants and a large number of ministers.

The ongoing climate change talks are based on the 1998 Buenos Aires Plan of Action, which seeks to accelerate implementation of the 1992 Convention by both developed and developing countries while finalizing the operational details of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Protocol will require developed countries to reduce their collective greenhouse gas emissions by 5% compared to 1990 levels by the period 2008-2012.

Although adopted two-and-a-half years ago, the Protocol has not yet entered into force because governments are awaiting agreement on just how it will operate in practice. Many governments expect to be in a position to ratify the Protocol after finalizing the Kyoto rulebook in The Hague. It will enter into force and become legally binding after it has been ratified by at least 55 Parties to the Convention, including industrialized countries representing at least 55% of the total 1990 carbon dioxide emissions from this group.

The Kyoto rulebook must include accounting methods for national emissions and emissions reductions, rules for getting credit for forestry “sinks” (in which new trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thus offsetting emissions), a regime for monitoring compliance with commitments, and procedures for the Protocol’s Clean Development Mechanism and Joint Implementation and Emissions Trading systems.

A comprehensive political package must also address issues relating to the 1992 Convention, including technology transfer and the special concerns of developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to climate change or to the economic consequences of emissions reductions by developed countries.

During this week's meetings in Bonn, governments formally welcomed the designation of Dutch Environment Minister Jan Pronk as the President of The Hague conference. They also welcomed the offer of Morocco to host COP 7 in late 2001 in Marrakesh.

The meetings consisted of the 12th sessions of the COP's Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA). They were attended by some 1,700 diplomats and representatives of non-governmental, intergovernmental, and UN organizations.

Note to journalists: For interviews or additional information please contact Michael Williams in Geneva at (+41-22) 917 8242/44, fax (+41-22) 797 3464, e-mail mwilliams@unep.ch or Nardos Assefa in Bonn at (+49-228) 815-1526, fax (+49-228) 815-1999, e-mail nassefa@unfccc.int. See also www.unfccc.int.