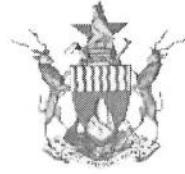


123



**ZIMBABWE**

**SPEECH**

**BY**

**SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

**F. R. NHEKAIRO (Ms)**

**AT COP 17**

**DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA**

**8 December 2011**

**The COP President,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**First and foremost, I would like to congratulate you on your election to the COP Presidency. My delegation pledges to give you our full support during your entire term of office.**

**We meet here in Durban at a time when climate change – long on the international agenda – should be receiving the very highest attention that it merits. We welcome the attention that this global threat is receiving from the United Nations.**

**Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**As the Conference of Parties (Cop 17) to the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change progresses here in Durban, it is important to note that the negative effects of climate change continue to worsen daily especially on our agro-based economy.**

**Zimbabwe has not been spared at all from all this as we already experience drastic changes in our weather patterns in the form of extreme temperatures, extreme thunderstorm activity, floods and droughts. All these speak volumes of the negative changes that we are exposed to and demonstrate how vulnerable we are to the impacts of climate change.**

**Madam President, one does not need to look further to see some of these ominous signs which have already manifested in our weather patterns and have since wreaked havoc in the lives of our people. For instance, the on-set of the rain season is now delayed and has now become generally unpredictable. When it rains, flush-flooding is now very frequent. These are not just unusual occurrences but a sure warning sign that all is no longer well in our region.**

**We are already experiencing a decline in rainfall and increase of temperatures. Several climate models have suggested that water resources in the country are expected to dwindle and crop yields in Zimbabwe are likely to decrease considerably. This is already happening and calls for urgent action.**

**Zimbabwe and most of Africa continue to face numerous severe negative impacts arising from the adverse effects of climate change that have been documented and supported by scientific findings, including those of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other reports. Such impacts are hampering Africa's efforts to attain its development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.**

**We have already experienced an increase of up to 2 Degrees Celsius in some areas of Zimbabwe in the past century. This year in October, long-term maximum temperature records have been broken. The increasing global temperatures are associated with undesirable climate change impacts such as the resurgence of malaria in areas that did not experience malaria before, loss of biodiversity and the shifting of existing agricultural zones that we are currently observing.**

**The encroachment of desertification in the south western parts of Zimbabwe has also been linked to climatic variations. Climate sceptics have no place in our daily lives in this region.**

**Madam President,**

**We are deeply concerned by the slow progress of negotiations, particularly the delays caused by some of our colleagues from the north in various issues. Zimbabwe would like to see all actions and measures related to climate change to be in full conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular those of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.**

**We share and support the African position on climate change in the negotiations and reiterate that the climate negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should produce the two expected outcomes in line with the Bali Roadmap.**

**These should include an agreed outcome on long-term cooperative action to enhance the implementation of the Convention, and an amendment to Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol regarding further mitigation commitments of Annex I Parties for a second commitment period from 2013 to 2017 under the Kyoto Protocol.**

**As a responsible Party, we also express our deep concern that the inadequate mitigation pledges, notably by Annex I Parties under the Cancun decisions, risk an increase in global average temperature of greater than two degrees Celsius in the near future. Such temperature increases will have catastrophic effects on our country.**

**We are very much aware that the mitigation pledges by Annex I Parties in the context of the climate change negotiations amount to less than the voluntary mitigation pledges by non-Annex I Parties. I join my colleagues who have spoken earlier in stressing that Annex I Parties must show leadership including through raising their level of ambition to the scale required by science and equity.**

**Madam President,**

**Whilst we understand very well the need to slow down the rate of climate change, I would like to inform this August House that adaptation is the essential priority for Zimbabwe and that there is an urgent need for our colleagues from the developed world to immediately provide adequate support for the implementation of adaptation measures and actions in our countries. Africa's position on this is clear and should be heeded by all Parties.**

**Madam President,**

**I would like to see an outcome on our own soil, Africa, which contains measures to expedite work on establishment of an international mechanism to reduce and compensate loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.**

**These include impacts on agriculture, water, human health and other areas related to extreme weather events.**

**We also join the rest of the developing world in calling for developed country Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to honour their commitments firstly for the first commitment period, and through ambitious mitigation commitments for a second and subsequent commitment periods.**

**Madam President, why should we talk about this year in year out? Do we all view climate change in the same way or is it that our colleagues are perhaps using the world as a big laboratory to try their experiments on the developing world? Patience is running out and we stress the urgency of agreeing to a second commitment period in Durban to avoid a damaging gap between commitment periods.**

**As I conclude, Madam President,**

**I would like to request developed country Parties that are not party to the Kyoto Protocol to join others in the second commitment period and undertake legally binding commitments whether it will be under the Convention or a new climate change regime. Dear colleagues, your commitments should be comparable in magnitude and effort to other Annex I countries and must be measurable, reportable and verifiable.**

**A successful outcome from negotiations under the UNFCCC in Durban is essential for Zimbabwe. The whole of Africa is being hit fastest and hardest by global climate change. As you are all aware, the continent has contributed the least to climate change, and is among the least equipped to adapt to its adverse effects.**

**I thank you all**