



**Opening of the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12)  
Nairobi, 6 November 2006**

**Statement by Yvo de Boer  
Executive Secretary,  
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Your Excellency, the Vice-President of the Republic of Kenya, Mr. Arthur Moody Awori,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the post-independence years Kenya has taken on a big development challenge. This involved making sure that the voices of the weak are not lost among the voices of the strong. There is much to learn from this experience. *Harambee*, or “pull together”, the national motto of Kenya, is very relevant to the climate change process.

I thank your Excellency, the Vice-President of the Republic of Kenya, for being here today. Let me also congratulate you, Minister Kibwana, on your election as President of COP 12 and COP-MOP 2, and to thank you for the special effort that you and your Government have made in organizing this Conference - the first one of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa. Please be assured of the full support of the secretariat during your presidency. I also extend our gratitude to our United Nations partners, in particular UNON and UNEP for making available their premises and for their help in organizing the Conference. Finally, I would also like to thank Minister Rona Ambrose, President of the COP 11-COP/MOP 1, and the whole Canadian team for their able presidency over the past year.

The international climate change process is about building the future. The urgency of addressing the challenge of climate change is such that the foundations and the walls have to be built at the same time, to use the construction analogy. The foundations include crucial blocks such as capacity building, technology transfer to developing countries and adaptation to climate change impacts. These are critical for developing countries to participate in the process. The walls are being constructed in the discussions on the future under the Convention’s Dialogue and the Ad hoc Working Group (AWG).

There are also important initiatives emerging outside the UNFCCC process. The World Bank will be presenting its new framework on generating investment into clean energy and green development, a mortgage that is required to advance the construction. Sir Nicolas Stern will be reporting on the results of the extensive review of the economics of climate change that he led, and presenting his view on what will be the cost if we do not rise to the challenge in time.

I am very pleased to be here in my new role of Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC. I have moved from having one boss, to having one hundred and eighty-nine. In this role I see it as my main responsibility to support the negotiation process and help Parties make progress under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. Part of that responsibility is to develop options and point out opportunities for making progress, or to highlight, if opportunities are being missed. I am fortunate to be supported in this role by the enthusiastic and dedicated team of the secretariat.

Much has been achieved over the last year: the first session of the Dialogue under the Convention and the first session of the AWG; two regional workshops on adaptation for the Latin American and African regions; an explosion of activities in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM); the launch of the Track II procedure under the Joint Implementation; start of the development of the International Transaction Log; start of the work of the Compliance Committee; and advances in the area of technology transfer, including publication of the practitioner's guide on financing.

Minister Kibwana has earlier eloquently summarized the substantive areas that need to be addressed, and the main goals of this conference. Moving from assessment to action on adaptation; strengthening the CDM and making it accessible to more countries; finalizing operationalization of joint implementation; advancing technology transfer; and keeping momentum in the talks on the future - this is a very challenging set of objectives, but one that is crucial for the success in building the future that we aspire to.

A lot of very hard work has gone into getting everything ready for the Conference, but there will still be some logistical challenges. We are doing the best we can to overcome these challenges and to help the meeting run smoothly. Your secretariat, as always, stands ready to support you.

However, the overall challenge is a substantive one. *Harambee*, let us pull together, so that the process moves forward on those critical issues. Let's make this meeting the success that the world expects!

Thank you and good luck.

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