

Statement to the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly
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1. It is indeed a great pleasure for me to address the second committee of the United Nations General Assembly as the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat.

2. The progress report that I have submitted (A/58/ ...) provides you with the outcome of the Eighth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Climate Change Convention, which was held in New Delhi, India in October/November last year. I gave you a brief oral report on the outcome of the Conference last year, as I was speaking to you immediately after the conclusion of the Conference. At that time, I had informed you that the outcome reflected the transitional character of the current situation in the climate area – an important transition from negotiations to implementation. I would like to follow-up on that observation and provide information on four areas of the work of the Conference of the Parties that have wider implications -- the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, the Clean Development Mechanism, collaboration among the three ‘Rio’ Conventions, and support to least-developed countries.

3. I had expected that the Kyoto Protocol would enter into force in 2003. The Protocol has yet to enter into force and, following the World Conference on Climate Change, uncertainty continues. The Kyoto Protocol will enter into force 90 days after being ratified by 55 governments, including industrialised countries representing at least 55% of that group’s 1990 carbon dioxide emissions. At the moment (*Sept. 25*), 118 Parties have ratified the Protocol, including developed countries accounting for 44.2% of CO₂ emissions. The Russian Federation and several other countries have indicated that they plan to ratify in the

near future. This will push the percentage over the threshold. I, therefore, trust that the Protocol will enter into force next year. As evidence is mounting that the adverse impacts of climate change would undermine national and international efforts at achieving sustainable development, the need for vigorous national and international action in dealing with climate change is obvious.

4. The Clean Development Mechanism is well under way. This is an innovative financial mechanism to help channel private-sector investment into emissions reduction projects in developing countries, and in this way promote sustainable development in these countries while offering industrialised governments credits against their Kyoto targets. Its Executive Board, supported by technical panels, has advanced the process to the point where project activities can be registered. The Board has developed operational procedures, approved baseline and monitoring methodologies, and the accreditation procedures for operational entities who will validate projects and certify emission reductions. Twenty Parties have already identified their designated national authorities that will endorse projects. Promising areas for such projects identified so far include landfill gas capture and flaring, incineration of hydrofluorocarbon waste streams, fuel switching, and biopower from rice husk.

5. The Conference of the Parties has affirmed the need for enhanced collaboration between the Rio conventions -- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UNEP Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) -- for ensuring environmental integrity and promoting synergies under the common objective of sustainable development. The aim is to avoid duplication of efforts, strengthen joint efforts and use available resources

more efficiently. Enhancing such collaboration has also been noted in the conclusions and decisions of the governing bodies to the other Rio conventions.

6. We have established a Joint Liaison Group, comprising of the Executive Secretaries and officers of the subsidiary bodies of the three conventions. The group has identified major cross-cutting thematic areas for synergistic activities, including technology development and transfer, education and outreach, research and systematic observation, impacts and adaptation, capacity building, and reporting. Closer links are being considered between national action programmes under the UNCCD and national adaptation programmes of action under the UNFCCC. A common information strategy is being developed, and a joint calendar of relevant events has been posted on the websites of the three conventions. In addition, the need to strengthen coordination among national focal points has been emphasized.

7. We have a major process to respond to the specific needs of least developed countries (LDCs). Using resources from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), LDCs are preparing their National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), supported by the Implementing Agencies of the GEF -- UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank -- and advised by the LDC Expert Group. The NAPAs bring together existing analyses on the impacts of climate change; integrate adaptation considerations into sustainable development priorities and strategies; and, identify prioritized project profiles of actions they wish to undertake that would address their urgent and immediate needs in adapting to climate change.

8. I remain optimistic that the on-going work within the convention process and the World Summit on Sustainable Development plan of implementation, in particular its provisions on energy for sustainable development, point us to the direction of enhancing international cooperation in addressing the problem of climate change.

I thank you.