



**FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE - Secretariat
CONVENTION - CADRE SUR LES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES - Secrétariat
Opening of the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8)
New Delhi, 23 October 2002**

**Statement by Joke Waller-Hunter
Executive Secretary,
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It is my pleasure to welcome all delegates to the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties in New Delhi. We are extremely grateful to our host country, India, for having invited us to Delhi. I extend my sincere congratulations to Minister Baalu for his election as President of COP 8. I am confident that his leadership will guarantee a successful meeting. Please be assured, Sir, that you have the secretariat on your side to support you in your task. May I also take this opportunity to thank Minister Elyazghi for his able presidency that resulted in the Marrakesh Accords. Your initiative to bring the COP to Africa, your personal commitment and vision, which were essential ingredients for a successful outcome, and your wisdom in conducting the meetings of the Bureau will long be remembered.

This is the first gathering of one of the [Rio] conventions since the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. At the Summit the understanding of sustainable development was broadened, particularly the linkages between poverty, the environment and the use of natural resources. The Summit strongly endorsed the message that poverty and environment cannot be separated. This holds very true for climate change and is embedded in the Marrakesh Declaration. Broadening the debate on global collaboration on climate change to sustainable development suggests that contributions by developing countries to the management of the risks of climate change should not be seen as a burden but as flowing out of internationally supported development. More work may be needed to explore the development-climate interface, so as to explore the possibilities of deriving climate change action, be it mitigation or adaptation, from achieving development goals.

The outcome of the WSSD that is specifically related to climate change gives a strong impetus to implement what has been agreed since the Convention entered into force, most recently through the Marrakesh Accords. In addition, the concerted efforts to move towards more sustainable consumption and production that were agreed at the Summit will undoubtedly positively impact on the efforts to combat climate change, which require such fundamental changes. It may be worthwhile to explore these links in greater depth. The same holds true for the strong push towards sustainable energy patterns, which were agreed at the Summit. I trust that the positive spirit of Johannesburg will permeate our COP 8.

This COP will mark a transition from negotiations towards implementation. The Marrakesh Accords must now lead to action by all actors at the national level, supported by international cooperation, following the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The Declaration adopted by the GEF Assembly last week in Beijing, underlines the importance of capacity-building for achieving results and improving performance at the country level, stating that capacity needs and priorities should be identified and addressed in a systematic way. This is a challenge for our Convention as well.



Sharing experiences, analysing what works and what does not, are key to drive further progress and future action. The entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol will only increase the demand for reliable and accessible information. As of today 96 countries have ratified, representing 37.4% of the emissions. I see it as a major responsibility of the Secretariat to facilitate exchange of information by providing readily understandable information to those involved in implementation and by maintaining an authoritative database on greenhouse gas emissions and policies and measures of all Parties to the Convention. If we want the CDM to be successful in its early stages, the information on its rules and procedures must be easily accessible and straightforward so that the private sector, governments, NGOs and others interested in engaging in CDM projects will be able to do so. This COP will evaluate the considerable achievements of the CDM Executive Board in its first year of operation.

Mr. President, the agenda of this COP presents an interesting mix of issues. They have in common that they are related to implementation, the key thrust of our meeting and its High Level Segment. I look forward to seeing the COP finalize issues that have been under consideration for quite some time, like those related to Articles 5, 7 and 8 of the Kyoto Protocol and the guidelines for national communications of non-Annex I countries, to give just two examples. The COP will also take stock of what has been achieved, for example when it reviews the performance of the GEF as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention, as well as when it considers good practices in policies and measures or progress in capacity-building.

It will also look forward by defining the modalities of the first COP-MOP, probably next year, as well as when it looks at further methodological requirements, based on an inventory of current work. The need to broaden the methodological work to the area of vulnerability and adaptation as Minister Baalu indicated, an area deserving more priority, may be one of the outcomes of this COP. Various initiatives on adaptation and vulnerability are currently under way and pulling them together in a common framework may prove to be useful when Parties actually start developing approaches and policies. It is in this area that synergies among the conventions can be strengthened, as changes in the climate system will impact on land and aquatic resources and the biodiversity that they hold, a message that was reinforced by the WSSD.

Let me conclude by wishing all of us a constructive and successful COP that will give a strong boost to implementation.

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