



**The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Gaborone, Botswana, 17 October 2013**

**Statement by John Kilani
Director of Sustainable Development Mechanisms programme
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Honourable ministers,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I bring you greetings from the UNFCCC's Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres, who deeply regrets not being here in person, due to scheduling conflicts. Ms. Figueres wishes that I express her thanks to the government of Botswana for hosting this important meeting and to Hon. Dr. Huvisa, Minister of State for Environment of Tanzania and President of AMCEN for the kind invitation to her and the UNFCCC.

Honorable Ministers, You meet here less than a month before the UN Climate Change Conference takes place in Poland. As you know all too well, the Warsaw conference is another important step on the road to a fully-fledged global climate regime.

We approach COP 19 in Warsaw in the context of a loud alarm bell: the recently released IPCC report tells us in very clear terms that time is running out; that we absolutely have to accelerate all our efforts at mitigation if we want to avoid the highest cost of adaptation, because those two aspects of climate change are intimately linked.

By midcentury, the growing world population will need 50% more food, 45% more energy and 30% more water. Climate change multiplies and amplifies all threats we face in meeting those needs.

This region is at the forefront of these threats and as has been pointed out in the past, Africa is the continent that is most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change.

I applaud the African Union (AU) and AMCEN for the increasing attention being paid to climate change and sustainable development. I commend UNEP for providing support and opportunities like this for Africa to prepare for active engagement in climate change negotiations.

The negotiations process that concluded in Doha built on the unprecedented momentum that was created in Durban by:

- Extending the Kyoto Protocol until the year 2020;
- Delivering arrangements for enhanced action on mitigation and adaptation not covered by the Kyoto Protocol until 2020 through “the agreed outcome”; and
- Launching a process to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force and enhance pre-2020 ambition.

The above context has defined work on all subjects for the bodies of the Convention with a view to implementing the agreement and preparing the new climate change regime.

What must be accomplished at COP 19 is not trivial and it is not easy. But, it is crucial for governments of the world to fulfil their commitments to their people and to the international community.

Governments have agreed to limit warming to below two degrees Celsius, have agreed to scale up finance and have agreed to a new, universal climate agreement in 2015.

These commitments represent a new, low-carbon path forward that meets the needs of the growing population without saddling future generations with a climate burden. Meeting these commitments is good for the planet, for all people, and for global prosperity.

For this year’s COP to be a step in the right direction, progress must be achieved in three key areas. Today, I will address these core deliverables, how they fit into the overall process as we approach 2015 and how you can contribute.

COP 19 must achieve progress in finance, loss and damage and the Durban Platform.

On finance:

Governments must take the next crucial step in providing clarity on scaling up the mobilization of climate finance toward the \$100 billion goal for the Green Climate Fund.

Parties must leave Warsaw having provided the necessary political support required to implement enhanced action in mitigation and adaptation and clarity on results-based finance for REDD+.

In other words, efforts should focus on the financial and institutional strengthening of the Convention funds; as well as in making progress in mobilizing long-term finance.

On loss and damage:

Governments must also take steps that enable developing countries to react to climate-related loss and damage. It is crucial to protect vulnerable populations from the results of slow onset events and catastrophic weather that an unstable climate will bring.

This is extremely important for this region, as African countries are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate and therefore at risk from levels of loss and damage that will have significant impacts on lives, livelihoods and the prospects for sustainable development.

On the Durban Platform:

Last but not least, at COP 19, it is essential that governments continue work on the details of the new, universal climate agreement under the Durban Platform.

Warsaw must further clarify understanding on elements of the agreement, and underline that in 2014, Parties may have to double their efforts to identify the contributions they can make at a domestic level to ensure the 2015 agreement puts the world on the path to meet the two degree goal.

Warsaw must also explore ways to increase ambition before the new agreement enters into force in 2020, and come forward with initial contributions for the post-2020 period.

COP 19 must take us one step further down this path, building momentum and confidence on the road to 2015. It must highlight the action that is occurring at all levels of government and in all sectors of society, and with that inspiration mobilize further efforts that will drive the negotiations toward an ambitious 2015 agreement.

COP 19 is a central opportunity to prepare for 2014 and beyond. After this conference, we enter a year when the World Economic Forum will devote a third of the Davos meeting to climate.

This makes COP 19 an integral step on the critical path to success. And, it makes your participation extremely important.

In addition, let us not forget that Parties have developed a broad portfolio of institutional arrangements to support developing countries, all of which need to become fully operational in Warsaw.

And in case you feel there are not enough tasks on your plate, the world is eagerly awaiting ratification of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

The good news is that many national governments are already on board. Nations, developed and developing, are strengthening policy. The US, China, India, Mexico, South Africa and France all have recently enacted new national initiatives.

The good news is that business is on board. A majority of the largest investment institutions assess climate risk. Companies increasingly account for carbon and see bottom line gains from action.

We are witnessing a major mobilization for action and growing momentum behind the needed economic transition. This is happening at national and sub-national levels and in business and civil society. Multilateral cooperative arrangements bringing together actors around targeted objectives are multiplying.

Leadership is increasingly coming from developing countries and from non-state actors. Awareness of the problem and, more importantly, appreciation for the co-benefits of the solutions, is growing.

If the international community can take advantage of every opportunity we have between now and 2015, we can get on track to meet all our global commitments.

We are now approaching the halfway point on the road from Durban to Paris, where the 2015 climate change conference is scheduled to take place. The negotiations are now moving into their content forming phase where the elements of the actual outcome are starting to emerge.

Rest assured; there will be a deal in Paris no matter what. However, the deal in Paris will need to go beyond delivering the core legal agreement and refocus political attention on the broader economic reform agenda required to deliver the needed transformation.

To sharpen that political focus, the UN Secretary-General has decided to convene a Climate Change Summit in New York one year from now. He is taking this important step to mobilize not just Government leaders but also leaders of thought and non-governmental decision makers.

Next year, 2014, will therefore be a year of mobilization, delivery and the refocusing of the longer-term policy direction. Capitals don't need to wait for the international negotiations to conclude before launching the domestic, and in the case of the EU, regional processes to determine what each Party is prepared to do post 2020. Many are quite advanced in this homework and will use the SG's event next year to announce their intentions. The Warsaw Conference next month is expected to help Parties focus their homework.

The hardest nut to crack is designing lasting structures capable of providing true strategic focus to the risk management exercise of finding a safe landing zone for global emissions that respect the dual objective of meeting human needs while respecting planetary boundaries.

I encourage you to bring a solution-oriented mind-set and spirit of cooperation to this meeting. I encourage you to bring the history of success you have already developed to this year's conference.

I encourage you to bring your voice to the discussion at every opportunity and at every level.

Dear friends, we approach COP 19 in Warsaw at a time where the need for action has never been more clear.

So let's work together and move forward to a low-carbon future of sustainable and prosperous development that serves generations.

We can meet the climate challenge. Let's do it!

Thank you.
