



CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Tenth session

Buenos Aires, 6–17 December 2004

Agenda item 13 (a)

Conclusion of the session

Adoption of the report of the Conference on its tenth session

Draft report of the Conference of the Parties on its tenth session

Rapporteur: Ms. Sylvia McGill (Jamaica)

Addendum

**I. High-level segment: the 10th anniversary
of the entry into force of the Convention**

(Agenda item 10)

A. Opening of the high-level segment

1. The high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties (hereinafter referred to as the Conference) at its tenth session was opened by the President at the 4th meeting, on 15 December. In welcoming ministers and heads of delegation, the President said that such high-level attendance was appropriate for a conference that marked a major milestone in the history of the Convention process. In order for the Conference to deliver the results that the world expected from such an important event delegates had to redouble their efforts so that agreement could be reached on all items under discussion. It was important that they produced tangible results to show that the process was moving forward. He expressed his confidence that the high level of ministerial attendance and personal commitment would ensure the continuing willingness of Parties to act upon their common but differentiated responsibilities.

1. Statement by the Executive Secretary

2. The Executive Secretary said that in the 10 years since the entry into force of the Convention the science on climate change had produced ever more solid results. The possible impacts of climate change identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) were being increasingly observed around the globe. Climate models had become more robust and were being better tailored to local needs. Building on the scientific evidence, the Kyoto Protocol had set the rules for the use of unique instruments that allowed cost-effective emission reductions through market mechanisms. Registries were being put in place to ensure transparency and integrity in emissions trading. The Protocol's clean development

mechanism would provide support to sustainable development in developing countries, with associated private investments and technology transfer. In addition, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) had provided support to climate change projects of up to USD 1.6 billion, leveraging another USD 7.4 billion in co-financing over the past 10 years. The work on mitigation was being complemented by action on adaptation to climate change. Emphasizing the urgency of the need to prepare for the impacts of climate change, the Executive Secretary said that the Conference could make significant progress in advancing the intergovernmental consensus on adaptation, including support to the vulnerable developing countries.

3. The Executive Secretary further noted that industrialized and developing countries, guided by common but differentiated responsibilities, showed a wide variety of approaches to addressing mitigation and adaptation. National reports and inventories had proved very useful, not only for monitoring implementation and sharing information, but also for bringing actors together to define integrated climate strategies. Through the active participation of the private sector, climate-friendly technologies were finding their way into the market and it was encouraging to note that the emission intensity of the world's economy had fallen. However, concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere continued to rise at an ever-increasing pace, and 10 years of action on a problem with a time horizon of decades, if not centuries, could only be a first step. It was therefore important to plan the next steps if investment decisions were to respond to the challenges posed by the ultimate objective of the Convention. In conclusion, the Executive Secretary expressed her deep gratitude to the Government and the people of Argentina for hosting the Conference of the Parties a second time.

2. Message by the Secretary-General of the United Nations¹

4. The Secretary-General said that the Convention on Climate Change had helped to place climate change firmly on local, national and international agendas. It had also established the institutions and processes with which to address this global challenge. Much more needed to be done, however, for people to feel confident that the problem was being adequately addressed. Worrying signals continued to emerge about the impacts and risks of climate change, and the forthcoming Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC was expected to deepen the already compelling scientific case for urgent international action on both mitigation and adaptation. As climate impacts became unavoidable, the development agenda would have to evolve to include measures to help societies adapt. It was imperative that the international community not allow the consequences of climate change to undermine its work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Referring to the upcoming 10-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, he urged those attending these two meetings to make the most of these opportunities.

5. Much attention was now given to the imminent entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. The Protocol's innovative use of market-based mechanisms to control greenhouse gas emissions would open a new and exciting chapter in the history of environmental agreements. The Protocol also set up a solid system of support for sustainable development in developing countries, for example through the clean development mechanism. Those processes would be closely watched, and the Secretary-General urged delegates to make them work. He also called on them to look beyond the Protocol, which covered only the period up to 2012. The long-term challenge was to promote the use of low-carbon energy sources, low-emissions technologies and renewable energy sources. In developed and developing countries alike, there was a need for energy sources, technologies and development strategies that were more climate-friendly. It was also necessary to forge closer partnerships with the finance and investment community and to do more to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Without adequate mitigation, adaptation would become an insurmountable task. The long effort to come to grips with climate change had entered a new era. People around the world wanted genuine signs that the days of delay and doubt were now over. He

¹ The message was delivered by Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme.

called on delegates to seize that moment and assured them of the support of the entire United Nations system for that crucially important endeavour.

3. Statement by the President of Argentina

6. Expressing his satisfaction that Argentina was host to the tenth session of the Conference, the President of Argentina said that climate change was a global challenge threatening the very foundations of human civilization. The dramatic transformations brought about by modern technology had disturbed the planet's ecological equilibrium. Although those changes had originated in the developed world, costs were born by all countries, and particularly by developing countries, who had contributed least to the problem and were the most vulnerable. Climate change was likely to exacerbate poverty and hunger in many areas around the globe. It was therefore all the more important that the facts and the magnitude of the problem were acknowledged. Whole societies could be doomed to disappear if those who had the responsibility were not willing to undertake the efforts necessary to prevent this from happening. In view of what was at stake, developing countries had the right to use moral persuasion.

7. The President said that the Government of Argentina had implemented policies and measures aimed at mitigating climate change, reducing emissions and protecting ecosystems. Such measures included the promotion of renewable energy sources, efforts to increase energy efficiency, the preservation of forests, and the development of a comprehensive national environment agenda. However, reliable and sustainable solutions could only be developed through action on the part of all countries, in particular by those who had the financial and technological resources to do so. The burden of mitigation and adaptation action had to be shared equitably, based on the differentiated responsibilities and capacities of all parties involved. In this connection, the President noted that the poorest and most heavily indebted countries provided a large part of the global environmental assets contributing to biodiversity. Given that developed countries had benefited from that common good during more than two centuries of industrial development, they had an environmental debt towards developing countries. But while urging developing countries to settle their financial debts, developed countries were not willing to assume responsibility for their environmental debt.

8. Developing countries were already under considerable pressure struggling with poverty, a lack of access to world markets, and insufficient resources to provide education and basic infrastructure to their citizens. In view of the imbalance between rich and poor countries there was no reason for developed countries to delay fulfilment of their commitments under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. Developing countries, on the other hand, should seek to use the window of opportunity opening up with the fulfilment of those commitments to introduce innovative technologies which would allow the protection of the environment to be combined with sustainable economic development. In conclusion, the President called upon all developed countries to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and to participate in developing measures that would lead to concrete solutions.

4. Other statements

9. Statements were also made by the representatives of the Republic of Korea (on behalf of the Environmental Integrity Group), El Salvador (on behalf of the Central American countries), Tanzania (on behalf of the least developed countries), Kenya (on behalf of the African Group), and Netherlands (on behalf of the European Community and its member States).

B. Panel discussions among ministers and other heads of delegation

[to be completed]

II. Statements by observer organizations

(Agenda item 11)

A. Statements by United Nations bodies and specialized agencies

10. During the opening of the high-level segment at the 4th meeting, on 15 December, statements were made by the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization; the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme; the Chairman of the IPCC; the Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme; the Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the GEF; a Vice-President of the World Bank; the Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research; and the Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

B. Statements by intergovernmental organizations

[to be completed]

C. Statements by non-governmental organizations

[to be completed]
