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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES  
Seventh session  
Marrakesh, 29 October - 9 November 2001  
Agenda item 14 (a)

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES ON ITS SEVENTH  
SESSION, HELD AT MARRAKESH FROM 29 OCTOBER TO ... NOVEMBER 2001**

**PART ONE: PROCEEDINGS**

**CHAPTER I: OPENING OF THE SESSION**

*Subsequent sections of the draft report will be issued in addenda to the present document*

## **I. OPENING OF THE SESSION**

(Agenda item 1)

### **A. Opening of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties**

1. The seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, convened pursuant to Article 7.4 of the Convention, was opened at the Palais des Congrès, Marrakesh, Morocco, on 29 October 2001, by the President of the Conference at its sixth session, Mr. Jan Pronk, Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment of the Netherlands.

### **B. Statement by the President of the Conference of the Parties at its sixth session**

(Agenda item 1 (a))

2. The President of the Conference at its sixth session said that the adoption of the Bonn Agreements on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (decision 5/CP.6) had proved that the international community was capable of reaching agreement on global problems. In other words, multilateralism did work. Those agreements also signified the centrality of international cooperation to the higher common objectives of the global community. While globalization could be criticised, those political agreements had been the outcome of dialogue, mutual understanding, a sense of conciliation, a willingness to compromise, and a dedication to the sustainability of the earth as well as humankind. Moreover, they now made the Kyoto Protocol ratifiable, so that it could enter into force before the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

3. International relations and the United Nations were more important than ever. The events of 11 September 2001 had reverberated throughout the world, and had placed international relations in a new light; showing that international cooperation was needed to solve world problems. The greatest threat to security and stability lay in socio-economic inequality, political marginalisation and neglect of values. However, international cooperation was an ongoing process in which no country could proceed alone. Together the international community could move forward, provided that it took account of the interests of one another.

4. The main aim at the sixth session of the Conference had been to reach agreement on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. Thus, such extraneous issues as the agenda item held in abeyance at that session, and the rules of procedure, had been deferred until work was completed on the core issues. The latest scientific knowledge contained in the Third Assessment Report of the IPCC showed that the Kyoto Protocol represented only a small step forwards for the climate. Much remained to be done, and the Conference must not shy away from future debate on the adequacy of commitments, while respecting the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Equally, a solution should be found in relation to the rules of procedure, because clear rules would simplify the process considerably.

5. The focus at the present session would now be on completing the translation of the Bonn Agreements into legal language. In Bonn, all Parties had reaffirmed their intention to complete the work on the outstanding issues in a manner that would be faithful to those

agreements. And his own consultations in the inter-sessional period with political leaders had led him to think that all wanted to maintain the integrity of the political agreements reached.

6. In conclusion, he expressed his appreciation to the members of the Bureau and to the UNFCCC secretariat for their support during his term of office, and to all participants for making the Bonn session of the Conference a success.

**C. Election of the President of the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session**

(Agenda item 1 (b))

7. At its 1<sup>st</sup> plenary meeting, on 29 October 2001, on the proposal of the outgoing President, the Conference of the Parties elected by acclamation Mr. Mohamed Elyazghi, Minister of Territory Planning, Urban Management, Housing and Environment of Morocco, as its President.

**D. Statement by the President**

(Agenda item 1 (c))

8. On assuming office, the President welcomed all participants to the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties. Morocco was indeed proud to be the host of the first session of the Conference to be held in Africa, a continent which greatly suffered from the negative effects of climate change, while supporting international efforts to counteract those effects. It was his hope that such efforts would be placed in the general context of the struggle to eradicate poverty and improve living conditions in the developing world. In the aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001, it was all the more necessary for the international community to work together fruitfully and in harmony. The fact that the Conference was taking place as scheduled was a clear message to those who sought to halt the march of progress towards mutual understanding among peoples and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In the scant three months that had elapsed since the end of the previous session, his country had mobilized all at its disposal to ensure a suitable working environment for the Conference, and he paid tribute to all those who had contributed to that effort. Morocco was particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, whether through flood or through drought, as could be seen in the countryside nearby. It was thus a firm supporter of the process initiated at Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and would soon complete the legislative procedures for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.

9. The success achieved at the Bonn session, after the uneasy denouement at the Hague, had not only been due to the sense of responsibility and political will evinced by all concerned, but must be attributed in particular to the outstanding contribution of his predecessor, Jan Pronk, whose perseverance, wealth of ideas and variety of solutions had left an indelible mark on the negotiations. He would surely be called upon again to contribute to the process. The present session of the Conference had but one objective: to give effect to the Bonn Agreements, lay the foundation for the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, and present a strengthened Convention to the Johannesburg summit. It also had but one watchword: respect for the integrity of the Bonn Agreements. The way ahead was clear, the positions of all Parties were known; and he was convinced that dialogue, an ability to listen to the other's point of view, and a measure of determination would carry the day. For time was of the essence. The Third Assessment Report of the IPCC, "Climate Change 2001", had once again set the alarm bells ringing. The role of the Conference was not only to devise responses and solutions to the problems of climate change –

but to do so in a manner that would be comprehensible to people in their daily lives. The Convention should take its rightful place, alongside the instruments on bio-diversity and desertification, in the fight against poverty, hunger, and the problems of water supply. And the present session should demonstrate that multilateral negotiations within the framework of the United Nations were capable of yielding concrete decisions and commitments.

#### **E. Addresses of welcome**

(Agenda item 1 (d))

10. Mr. Abdelaziz Saâdi, President of the Regional Council of Marrakesh, presented the best wishes of the H. M. Mohamed VI, King of Morocco, for the success of the Conference, and noted that the seventh session offered an historic opportunity, in view of the scientific and political nature of the issues, to make significant progress in facilitating effective action to combat climate change. Indeed, with ever-increasing drought, the desert was encroaching further, and the arable land was shrinking, phenomena that had negative effects on the economy by promoting rural-urban exodus and increasing unemployment. In conclusion, he welcomed all participants to Marrakesh, the 'capital of the South'.

11. Mr. Omar Jazouli, President of the Urban Community of Marrakesh, welcomed all participants to the city of Marrakesh, an imperial city with a glorious and radiant past, and a world heritage site recognized by UNESCO. The seventh session of the Conference would be called upon to fashion solutions to the problems of global warming, drought, the ozone layer, and greenhouse gas emissions, in order to avert a world-wide disaster. As a signatory of the Convention in 1992 at Rio, Morocco had taken early measures to deal with the problem of environmental degradation with the creation by his late Majesty, King Hassan II, of a Ministry for Environmental Protection, Marrakesh, as the tourist centre of Morocco, was undertaking activities to protect the green heritage of the city, as well as projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the waste treatment and transportation sectors.

#### **F. Statement by the Executive Secretary**

Agenda item 1 (e))

12. The Executive Secretary assured the incoming President of his support during the session, and singled out the warm welcome accorded to all representatives by the people of the beautiful and historic city of Marrakesh and its region. He also paid special tribute to the outgoing President, Jan Pronk, who for nearly two years had devoted his energy and political commitment to the fashioning of the Bonn Agreements. Those Agreements had constituted a major step forward in combating climate change, as well as a breakthrough for multilateral cooperation. Multilateralism had been further boosted by the holding of the present session of the Conference, thanks to the determination of the host Government and notwithstanding the current upheavals in world politics. It was thus incumbent on all to maintain the political momentum generated at Bonn and transform it into substantial decisions which would guarantee the progress of the Convention and the implementation of its Kyoto Protocol.

13. Meeting the challenge ahead would require a demonstration of political will on the part of all countries, but above all those listed in Annex II. The withdrawal of the United States from the Protocol meant that the remaining Annex II countries must ensure that the implementation of

the Protocol would lead to genuine reductions in their greenhouse gas emissions, despite the flexibility permitted by the Bonn agreements. It was precisely a change in the long-term trends of their emissions which the Convention sought to attain in one of its most important commitments, one which must remain a central aim of action by those countries. Similarly, the international community expected those countries to show the necessary political commitment to the initial phase of the clean development mechanism, a mechanism which promised much to the developing countries, but which might be affected by a lack of market demand.

14. Gathering for the first time on the African continent, the Conference of the Parties must seize the opportunity to give special consideration to the situation faced by African countries with regard to climate change. While bearing no historical responsibility for the phenomenon, they were nevertheless on the frontline as regards its harmful effects. The Conference represented an opportunity, whether by strengthening action in the area of adaptation, or through the clean development mechanism, to meet the needs of those countries, particularly the least developed among them.

15. Furthermore the agenda of the session provided the Conference with an opportunity to look further ahead: the Third Assessment Report of the IPCC could yield pointers for the future work of the Convention, while the item concerning the Conference's input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development could spark a debate not only on the implementation of the Convention but also on the development of climate strategy in the medium term. The Summit itself, too, could well map out the direction of the next phase of climate negotiations, mobilizing the entire climate family, with every member playing its role. This being the last session of the Conference he would attend as Executive Secretary, he expressed his heartfelt hopes for its success.

#### **G. Other statements**

16. At the 1<sup>st</sup> plenary meeting, on 29 October 2001, statements were made by the representatives of Iran (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China); Burkina Faso (on behalf of the African Group); Switzerland (on behalf of the Environmental Integrity Group); Ghana; Slovenia (on behalf of Central Group 11, Malta and Cyprus); Mali (on behalf of the Least Developed Countries); Saudi Arabia; Australia; Kazakhstan (on behalf of CAC&M); Japan; Kuwait; Belgium (on behalf of the European Community and its member States); Canada; and United Arab Emirates.

17. All those who spoke reiterated their commitment to maintaining the political integrity of the Bonn Agreements, and indicated that the task of the present session was to translate those Agreements into legal language in order to complete the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

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