

STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OF
BRAZIL AT THE HIGH LEVEL EVENT CONVENED BY THE UN
SECRETARY GENERAL
THE FUTURE IN OUR HANDS: ADDRESSING THE LEADERSHIP
CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE
New York, September 24, 2007

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, stated at the United Nations General Assembly, in 2003, that “every nation that is internally committed to democracy should strive – in its international relations – to defend transparent, legitimate and representative decision making”. It is in this spirit that Brazil comes today to this special meeting at the UN to address an issue that affects us all very deeply. The decision of the United Nations Secretary General to promote high level discussions on climate change is highly commendable not only because it allows the debate on this serious issue to continue in the most suitable forum, but also because it sends a clear message about the need to preserve and strengthen multilateralism and the United Nations.

Brazil is very concerned that the responses to the alarming perspectives of the impacts of climate change on the planet have been slow-moving, especially in those countries that, historically, are most responsible for the problem. The results from the latest IPCC reports, now with much narrower uncertainties than previously, point out to an unequivocal relation between climate change and human activities. The confirmation of a scenario that was already troubling,

particularly for the most vulnerable countries, tells us that the actions of all nations must be intensified, through a global effort, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. It is, however, very disquieting to analyze the results of the actions of developed countries with stable economies since 1990 and see that their greenhouse gas emissions have increased by 11% with respect to 1990 levels, and that the reduction of fossil emissions in the energy sector was, in this same period, the smallest of all the sectors, only 0.4%.

The developing countries have not evaded from their responsibilities under the Convention and will continue to give significant voluntary contributions in the global effort to reduce emissions which, we all know, needs to be deep and effective.

However, in the process of economic development, poverty eradication and improvement in the quality of life of their societies, the developing countries face several difficulties that need to be surpassed. The experience from the past in developed nations can be internalized today by the developing countries, so as to ensure that mistakes from the past do not perpetuate in the present and in the future.

In the past, Brazil chose to follow a clean energy production path, based mostly on hydropower energy generation and renewable biomass. This has resulted in fairly low emissions in this sector. Our greatest challenge is in controlling deforestation.

From 2004 to 2006, a marked drop in the rate of gross deforestation in the Brazilian Amazonia was achieved, more than 50%, corresponding to a reduction of almost half a million tonnes of carbon dioxide, without jeopardizing the gross domestic product of the region.

The implementation of actions, measures and policies to reduce deforestation in developing countries, one of the key issues in the discussions under the Convention, is an effort that requires progressive and continuous investment, in capacity building, in institutional strengthening, advanced monitoring and control technologies and in the implementation of economically viable alternatives to deforestation.

Brazil has been implementing its National Plan to Combat Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazonia, created in 2003, and that acts in some focal pillars, including territorial zoning, the creation of conservation units, and the intensification of monitoring and control actions, based on a monitoring system in real time

Today, conservation units and indigenous reserves sum up to more than 30% of the total area of the Brazilian Amazonia. The Action Plan foresees the expansion of protected areas and their continuous monitoring. This requires a expressive amount of investment from the governments and today, more than ever, it is recognized that financial positive incentives are necessary for the full implementation of

actions to reduce emissions from deforestation. Several developing countries do not have, today, the means to direct massive amounts of investments necessary to change the historical route in the use of their natural resources, not always sustainable.

We are aware of the responsibility that all nations, developed and developing alike, must bear at this moment of history. The current deadlocks in the post-2012 negotiations must be addressed with political and ethical vision, committed to the desires and needs not only of part, but of all the population of the planet.

Thus, there is no other path but one of working together. For the developed countries, this means their commitments with targets far more ambitious than those set by the Kyoto Protocol, through increasing domestic actions and strengthening of the flexibility mechanisms, particularly the Clean Development Mechanism, in addition to other complementary approaches that address sectors and activities not covered by flexibility mechanisms.

For developing countries, this also means the commitment to affording greater transparency and visibility to the actions they already undertake, as well as to the planned actions, policies and measures to mitigate climate change, and to the contribution these are expected to make, under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no more time for rhetoric: to act now is not just a question of political will, it is a question of responsibility, commitment, vision, ethics and survival.

The developing countries are prepared to face this challenge as nations that are aware of their role in this debate and of its commitment to *its society*, in order to ensure the right to a better future for us here today and for the future generations that succeed us.

Thank you.