



THE PERMANENT MISSION OF
SOUTH AFRICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

333 East 38th Street
9th Floor
New York, NY 10016
Tel: (212) 213-5583
Fax: (212) 692-2498
E-mail: pmun@southafrica-newyork.net

**STATEMENT
BY**

**MR. MARTHINUS VAN SCHALKWYK
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**AT THE
HIGH LEVEL EVENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

**UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK
24 SEPTEMBER 2007**

Check against delivery

Co -Chairs,

On behalf of South Africa I would like to thank the Secretary General for creating this opportunity to reflect on ways of urgently advancing the multilateral negotiations under the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.

The science is clear. Climate change is a fact, and delaying climate action will hit poor countries and communities hardest. The economic case for action is simple: the costs of inaction far outweigh the costs of action, and early action costs less.

With the scientific and economic case so clearly made, we have to reach agreement, by the end of 2009, on a fair, effective, flexible and inclusive framework that builds on the existing climate regime and the established principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities'. To this end, when we meet in Bali at the end of this year, we must agree to a *Road Map* for negotiations for the next 2 years.

Though countries have different responsibilities, we have a common responsibility to act in accordance with our respective national capabilities. Moving forward will therefore require participation by all developed countries under the Kyoto track, and the conversion of the key issues that emerged in the Convention Dialogue into meaningful negotiations for enhanced and incentivised developing country action.

Ultimately, political consensus by 2009 will depend on a package deal that balances the key interests and concerns of all Parties. The starting point must be equity. A core balance between sustainable development and climate imperatives, and between historical responsibility for the problem and taking responsibility for the future, will have to be the basis of any agreement. It must be flexible enough to accommodate country-specific aspects. And it must be inclusive.

Women and children are particularly vulnerable in the face of the devastating impacts of climate change. For South Africa the mainstreaming of gender and youth in climate policy, decision-making and implementation, is therefore a cross-cutting priority.

Co-Chairs, in designing a strengthened regime we should focus our efforts on five key building blocks. These are (i) adaptation, (ii) mitigation, (iii) dealing with the unintended consequences of response measures, (iv) technology development, diffusion and commercialization, and (v) financing and investment.

If an equitable balance is not achieved, or a building block is left out, it will be very difficult to reach an agreement by 2009.

Turning to the theme of this Plenary, it is clear that there are three mitigation strands that have to be woven into one multilateral framework.

- Firstly, more ambitious and quantified emission reduction targets for all developed countries under the Kyoto Protocol.
- Secondly, re-engagement of the USA and Australia in the full multilateral process and binding emission reductions.
- And thirdly, recognition of, and incentives for enhanced mitigation action by developing countries.

The global leadership required from developed countries is well defined in the Convention and Protocol. Carbon markets will be a key element. To fuel demand in the carbon market, deeper emission cuts based on ambitious mid-term targets for all developed countries will be required. Linked to the creative development of market-based instruments on the supply side, this will support developing countries to do more.

On the part of developing countries, building on our existing contributions, a range of measurable actions could be undertaken. In addition to participation in up-scaled CDM activities, this could include sustainable development policies and measures (SD PAMS), or reducing emissions from deforestation (REDD). Such measurable, reportable and verifiable policies and measures would have to be supported by technology and should be enabled by financing and investment.

In the adaptation area of work, South Africa favours an approach where implementation goes beyond the mainstreaming of adaptive activities with development planning. In terms of multilateral funding for adaptation, the challenge will be to up-scale the available resources with two to three orders of magnitude, without introducing new conditionalities for, or diverting existing overseas development assistance away from the urgent development and poverty reduction challenges faced by developing countries.

Co-Chairs, in summary, achieving a balance between climate stabilization and sustainable development is essentially in the hands of developed countries. The trigger to strengthen the regime must come from the North. Full participation by the world's largest historical emitter, the United States, is a prerequisite. Likewise, a credible and substantive offer from developed countries to address development and distributional issues in the future climate regime will be required. This will create the necessary trust and incentives to conclude, by 2009, negotiations on a fair, effective, flexible and inclusive climate regime after 2012.

In Bali we must lay the foundations for an agreement that will enable future generations to look back and know that we understood the gravity of the problem at hand and that we turned talk into action and discussions into negotiations.