



Closing Statement to the Seventh Session of the Conference of Parties (COP-7)



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Closing Statement to the Seventh Session of the Conference of Parties (COP-7) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

Marrakech, Morocco

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Mr. President, thank you for your efforts, as well as those of your appointed facilitators, to guide us through the work of this conference. Your task has been enormously difficult and we are grateful for your service.

I note with regret that this is the last Conference of Parties in which governments will benefit from the extraordinary skills of Michael Zammit Cutajar. My government thanks him for his tremendous service to the international community and commends the entire Secretariat for its outstanding assistance in Marrakech.

During this conference, progress was made in implementing the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Climate change is a serious issue that requires real action. The U.S. delegation appreciated that so many delegates expressed interest in understanding more fully President Bush's climate change initiatives and that they underscored their desire to cooperate on climate science, technological research, market-oriented approaches, and other promising solutions. We, too, seek to deepen international cooperation and we look forward to continuing those discussions.

We are pleased, in addition, that this conference has sent a forward-looking message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development that the international community is united on many matters regarding climate change. Stronger efforts to promote sustainable development could produce substantial climate change benefits.

I wish to highlight a few specific matters about steps taken in Bonn and at this conference.

It was recognized at the resumed COP-6, and here at COP-7, that all the Conference's conclusions on funding issues, although technically under the Framework Convention, were adopted in the context of moving forward on the Kyoto Protocol. As a result, there is a complete segregation of funds called for under the Kyoto Protocol from funds used to implement the Framework Convention. It is also recognized that the United States will not be expected to make financial contributions beyond its pre-existing commitments as set forth in the Framework Convention. Associated commitments, such as those calling for reporting on contributions, are obviously also inapplicable.

Regarding adoption of the Kyoto Protocol rules, although the United States does not intend to ratify that agreement, we have not sought to stop others from moving ahead. Our not blocking consensus on the adoption of the rules for the Kyoto Protocol does not change the United States's view that the Protocol is not sound policy.

- Among other things, the emissions targets are not scientifically based or environmentally effective, given the global nature of greenhouse gas emissions and the Protocol's exclusion of developing countries from its emissions limitation requirements, as well as its failure to address black soot and tropospheric ozone.

Though we have continued to participate constructively in the Framework Convention process, the decisions reached now -- including arbitrary restrictions on both the Kyoto mechanisms and credit for carbon sequestration -- reinforce our position that the Kyoto Protocol is just not workable for the United States.

Other countries should be aware that there are many areas in which the Kyoto Protocol and the rules elaborating it contain elements that would not be acceptable to the United States if proposed in another negotiating context in which we participate. Those elements include, for example:

- An institution to assess compliance with emissions targets that is dominated by developing country members without targets;
- More favorable treatment for parties operating within a regional economic integration organization relative to other parties; and
- Rules that purport to change treaty commitments through decisions of the parties rather than through the proper amendment

procedure.

Moreover, many of the processes used to arrive at recent decisions under the Framework Convention highlight the need to improve international decisionmaking on the environment. Excessive use of 'take-it or leave-it' ultimatums and Conference decisions that conflict with treaty requirements, for example, can only erode the effectiveness and legitimacy of multilateral environmental treaties. The United States is determined to improve the negotiating process, including in ongoing discussions led by the UN Environment Program.

I have submitted a written version of my remarks, and I ask for the text to be included in the written report of this conference. Thank you again, Mr. President.

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