

Statement by Ambassador Bagher Asadi, Chairman of the Group of 77 (Islamic Republic of Iran), at the Open-ended Informal High-level Consultations on Resumed COP-6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The Hague, 27 June 2001

Mr. President,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Colleagues,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to express, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, our most sincere words of appreciation to you and your distinguished colleagues for the excellent opportunity and arrangements for the Hague consultations. The countdown for the resumed COP-6 in Bonn has already started. Nevertheless, the circumstances are as uncertain as in April when we met in New York. Our colloquium here indicates, if nothing else, that we are ready and willing to go to Bonn to finish an unfinished job. And that in itself should be taken as a good omen and forward-looking approach. Every possibility should be explored and every effort should be made to ensure success of the resumed session. Let us hope that our two-day rendez-vous here will make a real, substantive contribution to this end.

Mr. President,

All of the colleagues here, including your good self, remember fully well the statement I made on April 21st in New York, in which the overall approach and specific positions of the Group of 77 and China on the status of the Kyoto Protocol and the new American policy were laid out in very clear terms. There is hardly any need to repeat them today. They are as valid now as were then. It should be added, however, that despite the continuing uncertainty and the fact that the outcome of the much-talked-about "policy review" in Washington is not out yet, the overall picture can be judged - of course with a certain degree of liberal optimism - to be less static than expected previously. Recent further reiteration of previous American pronouncements on the Kyoto Protocol along with reiteration of commitment to the Climate Change Convention seem to be at once confounding and containing some elements of positive future action.

Mr. President,

Now that your unbracketed text has been issued and studied, today I intend to present our reflections, preliminary as they are at this stage, on its provisions.

First and foremost, let me register our gratitude to you for the very valuable effort you have put into producing the new text. We consider your new text as a good tool in the course of these consultations and for the Bonn meeting. You can rest assured that it will be found useful as well as helpful in this on-going process. What I present here now is the outcome of the two precious days of intensive exchange of views within the Group of 77 on various parts and provisions of your new text - thanks to you, the Dutch Government as well as the other European Governments supporting these consultations. In our exchanges today and tomorrow, we will be frank and forthcoming in laying out our concerns and interests. The exercise, I hope - in fact, the whole Group hopes - would be found educational and enlightening, and that our negotiating partners would reciprocate the approach and would bring to the fore their respective outlook and specific positions. In underlining our commitment to the continuation of proactive and constructive engagement in the process we would like to indicate that the developing world is serious in pursuing its interests and demands and is equally well disposed to work in concert with all the willing fellow travelers towards saving the hard-won achievements of a decade-long collective multilateral enterprise.

Mr. President,

Turning to practical aspects of our work today, I should start with the reiteration of a rather familiar, and yet critical, concept; that is, the ultimate aim of our on-going negotiations has been, and continues to be, to fulfill the mandate established by the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. As such, the texts presented by the subsidiary bodies at the Hague last November form the basis of negotiations in Bonn in July. Moreover, compliance with that mandate also implies that no new agenda item should be introduced or injected in the work of the resumed session.

The most important, and in fact, the most pressing issue before us all, the entire international community, is to undertake with resolve and good faith to strengthen the implementation of the provisions of the Climate Change Convention. And simultaneously, we can, and indeed we should, continue our debates and deliberations on Kyoto Protocol issues with a view to resolving the outstanding issues. From our point of view, and it comes as no surprise, adaptation, technology transfer and provision of financial resources are Convention issues, whose implementation should command priority.

Within this overall framework, our specific positions on various crunch issues will be presented. For this, with your indulgence, Mr. President, when you take up specific crunch issues, I will ask my colleague, Mr. Mohammad Reza Salamat, an old hand and a known face in climate change negotiations, to be assisted by our Core Group Facilitators, to outline the Group's positions and demands.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.