3/

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

ZAMBIA'S NATIONAL STATEMENT TO THE UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE IN CANCUN, MEXICO

Delivered by
Hon. Catherine Namugala
Minister of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources

December 2010

The President Of The Sixteenth Session of The Conference of Parties to The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Her Excellency Patricia Espinosa, Minister Of Foreign Affairs of Mexico,

Heads of Delegations,

On behalf of the Zambian delegation, allow me to join the rest of the speakers before me to congratulate you, Madam President, and the other officers who have been elected to lead us in our deliberations here.

Madam President,

The disappointment and frustrations we experienced during the Copenhagen Conference is still fresh in our minds as we failed the global community to seal the deal when it mattered most. Therefore, my country regards this conference as crucial in restoring the confidence of the world to this process and deliver tangible outcomes that will help save the planet.

It is our expectation that this beautiful city of Cancun will live to its expectations and renew our resolve and commitment to deliver balanced set of decisions between the two tracks of negotiations. I need to stress that ultimately, we need to deliver a legally binding outcome to address the challenge of climate change effectively.

Madam President,

Let me now outline our specific expectations from Cancun:

Zambia strongly feels that adaptation has not received sufficient attention in our global efforts of addressing climate change this far.

We have focused more on mitigation measures, which I admit are important. However, this meeting should address adaptation more seriously to ensure that the most vulnerable countries like Zambia are helped to safeguard their people's livelihoods and achieve their development goals. The extreme climate related events we have experienced this year around the world speak for themselves.

It is clear that climate change impacts are working against attainment of Millennium Development Goals which are important for the economic development of countries like Zambia. It needs to be understood that as developing countries, our overriding priority is sustainable development of ensure we reduce poverty among our people and we need that space to develop.

As a delegation, we note the progress that has been made during this session on this important agenda item. Therefore, we expect a concrete outcome by putting in place an Adaptation Framework and establishment of the Adaptation Committee which will facilitate implementation of adaptation projects and programmes.

Madam President,

Financing both adaptation and mitigation will require huge amounts of resources which should be made readily available to the most vulnerable developing countries to help them cope with this challenge. It is our view that this Conference needs to deliver substantial long term financing for climate change and establishment of a transparent financial mechanism for managing these funds.

We therefore, call for a single Fund to be established here with multiple windows to finance specific requirements such as adaptation, technology, capacity building and the incentive mechanism in the forest sector, among others. It is equally important that we define a clear distinction between climate financing as a commitment and the Official Development Assistance (ODA) which is entirely under a different framework. These resources need to be new, adequate, predictable over and above the ODA.

Madam President,

In order for the poor and most vulnerable countries like Zambia to respond to climate change effectively, access to technology is crucial. Therefore, the Cancun Conference needs to deliver an effective technology development and transfer package which will overcome the traditional barriers such as high costs of these technologies and intellectual property rights, among others.

This support also needs to be extended to capacity building in order to enable our people learn new ways of responding to the challenges brought about by climate change. This is particularly important to our local communities who are at high risk and lack the means and knowledge to address the problem.

Madam president,

It has been recognised that our forest and the general land use sector plays an important role in the mitigation of climate change, but also have the potential to result in significant emissions if not well managed. It is important that we provide incentives for forest dependent communities for managing their forests and land use properly. It is our considered view that any mechanism addressing this sector needs to be broad and focused on empowering forest dependent communities economically and not narrowly on reducing emissions.

Finally, Madam President.

Let me comment on the need for Annex I countries to give a clear signal regarding their legally binding emission reduction commitments that they need to commit to in the second and subsequent commitment period.

The science is clear and impacts that developing countries are experiencing are more than compelling. It is absolutely critical for my delegation that this COP gives a clear signal about the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. In this regard, we expect a process to be established with a clear timeline when annex 1 countries as a group will commit to reduce their emissions by not less than 40% by the year 2020 compared with their levels in 1990, consistent with the best available science as reflected in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. This will ensure that the World averts dangerous climate change.

Madam President,

It is now almost clear that the potential gap between the first and subsequent commitment period is now almost a reality. We do not have any more time for lengthy delaying tactics; annex 1 countries need to demonstrate real leadership in this important area now!

With these few remarks, I wish to thank you Madam President for your indulgence and distinguished delegates for your kind attention.

I thank you all.