32

STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

AT THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE

SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP16) OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

AND THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL (COP / MOP 6)

CANCUN, 8th DECEMBER, 2010

Presented by

H.E. DR. KENNETH DARROUX

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES, PHYSICAL PLANNING AND FISHERIES

Madame President,

Heads of States and Governments, Ministers, Excellencies

It is an honour to be here in Cancun and from the onset I wish to convey the gratitude of the Commonwealth of Dominica Delegation to the Government and people of Mexico for the great hospitality which has been accorded to us as well as to the Secretariat for the excellent arrangements for this historic Sixteenth Conference of the Parties in this beautiful City of Cancun.

Madame President,

We support the statements made by Yemen on behalf of G77 and China, Grenada on behalf of the Alliance of Small Islands States and Venezuela on behalf the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean States.

Madame President,

The phenomenon of climate change has been well documented by the United Nations and other institutions over the past decade. The Commonwealth of Dominica and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) can speak of our experiences with the increasing intensity of hurricanes, droughts, floods, destruction to coastal areas and sea-level rise.

These have had severe impacts on our agriculture, tourism, water, physical and coastal infrastructures. This has led to an increasingly high cost for adaptation, resulting in the diversion of funds which otherwise would have been used for social and economic development. Climate change therefore, has become a major threat to the ability of developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Madame President,

For almost two decades the United Nations has recognized the special economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States. This special distinction of SIDS must be continued and secured in a legally binding document.

Despite our many challenges, Small Island Developing States continue to demonstrate strong leadership in the area of climate change at the domestic, regional and international levels. In the case of Dominica, significant progress has been made in the areas of the protection of biodiversity, preservation of our rain forest, and strategies for promoting renewable energy. These efforts need to be complemented both by the United Nations system as well as by other Member States especially the developed countries.

Madame President,

It is regrettable that to date no consensus has been reached on the best way to deal with what we consider a clear and present danger to our planet. The failure at Copenhagen should be further motivation for all countries to work assiduously towards an agreement here in Cancun. The two track process of the LCA and the KP must be continued. We are looking forward to commitment in the KP to reflect a second period. This, however, should not in anyway compromise the achievements which have been made in other areas such as adaptation, technology transfer, REDD Plus and financing.

Madame President,

The Commonwealth of Dominica is keen to see some assertive results coming out of this gathering here in Cancun in the area of REDD+. Dominica, perhaps more than any other country, has a strong case to make for strong conservation and protection of forest resources, since forests cover over two thirds of the island, over twenty percent of which is legally protected. Consequently, we look forward to benefit from a firm commitment for scaled-up REDD+ actions and finance and to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and coordination of REDD+.

Madame President,

Since the early 1990s we have been able to generate 40% of our electricity from hydro-powered turbines. Over the past 10 years we have been vigorously pursuing the development of geothermal energy. Our target is to ensure that by 2015 we will be able to provide 100% of our electricity from renewable sources.

Madame President,

The presence of all of us here in Cancun, demonstrates our individual and collective acceptance, that global climate change is a real threat to mother earth. It shows our commitment to take the necessary action required to reduce both our individual as well as collective impacts on our environment. We must, however, translate our commitment into real action. We should all use our best efforts to ensure that we live Cancun with some practical progress in all the critical areas and lay the foundation for a legally binding document in Durban. We must do it for our children's sakes.

I thank you.