SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, H.E. MR. BRUNO RODRÍGUEZ PARRILLA, AT THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE UNFCCC COP16/CMP6, CANCUN, MEXICO.

Madam Chairperson,

Distinguished Heads of State and of Government and other Heads of Delegations:

Mighty forces state, without hesitation, that climate change does not exist, that there is nothing to worry about and that the serious problem why we are gathered here today is a complete fabrication. Those are the forces in the US Congress that oppose ratification of the insubstantial instruments controlling the proliferation of nuclear weapons in a senseless crusade whose sole purpose is to finish recovering the small part of the power they lost just two years ago.

These are the forces that want to reduce the taxes of that 10% of the population which controls 90% of wealth, the same forces which oppose reform of the health system, unemployment insurance and any other proposal that may signify one small step towards progress and equity.

The truth is, and we who are gathered here know it very well, that climate change along with the serious threat of a war with nuclear dimensions constitute the most pressing problems faced by mankind in order to survive.

The absence of progress towards a real solution to both of these menaces answers to the irresponsible attitude of those who promote and benefit from the waste, catastrophes, wars and human tragedy endured by many peoples today.

There is no excuse to delay the collective actions that could put an end to these evils. It is a duty of all of us to demand that those who bear the greatest responsibility stop wasting and irrationally consuming the limited resources of our planet and that they devote themselves to promoting peace and the sustainable development of all peoples with those multi-million dollar budgets used today to wage war.

In 2009 alone, world military expenditures were estimated at 1,531 billion dollars, with almost half of these in the United States. With only 10 % of this figure, the modest Millennium Development Goals and Objectives could be fulfilled.

Just one year ago, in Copenhagen, we failed at fulfilling the expectations created around the 15th Conference of the State Parties to this Convention with the vision of reaching a global agreement that would confront, fairly and effectively, one of those problems: climate change.

Antidemocratic procedures and a complete lack of transparency prevailed at that Conference. A group of countries led by the United States, historically the greatest per capita gas emitting country in the world, made off with the negotiations process and promoted the imposition of a document that does not even resolve the

challenges identified by the most conservative scientific research on this subject. Regrettably, Copenhagen turned out to be a failure.

Afterwards, the US and the European Union threw themselves into a campaign of political, financial and conditional pressures for Official Development Aid to try to legitimize the nonexistent "Copenhagen Accord". The recently revealed classified American documents are of special interest, including the one recorded as 249182, 10 BRUSSELS183 of February 17, 2010 that refers to actions to "neutralize, co-opt or exclude" a group of states among which Cuba is mentioned.

Madam Chairperson,

Climate change is a global threat that requires global solutions as well, which are just, equitable and balanced, and include all the countries of the world. That is why we adopt, after great effort, the Framework Convention and its Kyoto Protocol and that is why their cardinal principles are as valid today as they were when we conceived them.

It is widely acknowledged that the main causes of this dangerous change in the world's climatic system are the unsustainable production and consumption patterns which prevail in the developed countries. It is also acknowledged that the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the respective capacities of States make up the keystone of a just and lasting solution.

We make one serious mistake and every possibility of real progress is threatened when we try to distance these negotiations from those already acknowledged truths, or when we try to evade the democratic procedures of the United Nations and turn to restrictive circles in order to seek arrangements for the principal countries responsible for this phenomenon.

We, the South countries, are not to blame for the impossibility of reaching an agreement to stop climate change. Rather we are the chief victims of the lack of progress and the selfish attitudes of those who are now enjoying over-exploitation of the planet's non-renewable resources. The small islands, which are even more vulnerable, deserve consideration and special treatment.

The World Peoples' Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth held last May in Cochabamba made essential proposals that must be taken into consideration.

Madam Chairman,

A long-term agreement to combat climate change has to ensure a sustainable development perspective for the Third World countries, not an additional restriction to its achievement. That implies that their greenhouse gas emissions must inevitably increase to satisfy the needs of their economic and social development. The Framework Convention establishes it thus and the developed countries must accept it.

In the framework of a second period of commitments within the Kyoto Protocol, the industrialized countries have to assume binding, quantified and more ambitious commitments to reduce their emissions.

The international community, particularly the developed countries, must help to get the United States to assume its historic responsibility and a responsible and committed behavior towards the endurance of our species, with the possibility of life for future generations.

Humankind must be willing to start implementing a future international program to confront climate change, with or without the United States. We can no longer be held hostage by the whims of one single nation, no matter how powerful that nation may be.

To fight climate change entails facing up to poverty and social inequality. It implies the obligation of transferring technology from the industrialized North towards the underdeveloped South. It requires facilitating financial resources that allow the developing economies to face adaptation and mitigation, and offering fresh funding above and beyond the already existing and evermore precarious commitments of Official Development Assistance.

We are not dealing with charity, but above all with a moral and legal obligation resulting from the commitments adopted in the Convention. The crumbs promised in Copenhagen are very meager and, more importantly, they are worth nothing unless they solve the problem. This will neither be solved by market mechanisms nor by the neoliberal policies that no longer have any credibility whatsoever.

Madam Chairperson,

At this minute, humankind has less than a decade to reach the point of no return. Today, the developed countries have before them once more the opportunity to make a choice in favor of making commitments that entail true meaning instead of continuing to cling to the selfish practices that have led the world into this dangerous situation. Fortunately, the real capacity to fight and overcome climate change still exists.

What we lack is the political will of the greatest responsible countries. We therefore demand their responsibility. Tomorrow will be too late.

Thank you very much.