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Address by His Excellency Ali bin Ibrahim Al-Naimi
Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources
Saudi Arabia

Conference of the Parties to the
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate
Change at its 16th Session
(COP16)

Cancun, Mexico
(December 2010)

Thank you, Madame (Mr.) President

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz, I would like to convey to you the greetings and express the appreciation of the people and Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the warm welcome we received in Mexico by His Excellency the president, Her Excellency the Foreign Minister and COP President, as well as the rest of the Mexican Government.

Madame President

This conference is going through a crucial stage leading up to the adoption of a way forward that will pave the way forward for the period after 2012, and addresses climate change mitigation and adaptation, both within the framework of long-term cooperation action under the Framework Convention on Climate Change or through the adoption of commitments under the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. The two tracks should progress at the same pace.

Madame President

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been involved and participates actively in the negotiations to reach an agreed outcome that takes into account the interests of all Parties and in particular our developing country Parties, in a framework of fairness, balance and comprehensiveness, contributing to positive growth of the global economy. We would like to confirm our commitment to shoulder our fair share in addressing climate change in the context of joint international efforts.

We believe that any agreed outcome to be adopted at the end of this conference should be inclusive and transparent and must take into consideration the following elements:

First: The outcome must be fully guided by the principles of the present Framework Convention on Climate Change, and in particular the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities between developed and developing countries, and the principle of equity, whereby no party should bear more than its fair share of the burden. In addition, no unilateral measures that discriminate against specific goods and skew the balance of international trade should be adopted.

Any agreed outcome should be adopted by consensus, enjoying the participation and acceptance of all parties, not a select few.

First: The outcome should also contain a decision that defines the commitments of Annex I Parties for the second commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol;

Second: It is difficult for us as Parties to accept any re-negotiation on the principles of the Convention, especially the principle of common but differentiated

responsibilities between developed and developing countries and the differentiation of commitments for each side, as stipulated in the Bali Action Plan;

Third: We also find it difficult to accept the introduction of commitments, explicit or implicit, on developing countries. Any measures adopted by these countries shall be voluntary and non-binding;

Fourth: It is very important for our petroleum exporting countries that the decisions of this conference include a clear mandate for inclusion of carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects in the Clean Development Mechanism;

Fifth: With regard to the decision on climate change response measure, it needs to include not only minimizing the adverse impacts of these measure on our developing countries, but also measures that would assist us in adaptation by diversifying our economies through increased investment and transfer of technology.

Sixth: We would like to stress the need for developed countries to meet their financial obligations, as stipulated in the framework convention on climate change, with public financing being the main source. We will not accept any financial commitments, direct or indirect, on developing countries.

Madame President,

Energy is the key to economic development for all States. It is therefore necessary for the outcome to lead to the creation of a sort of positive effect on global energy markets. Therefore, under an international system of mutual interdependence, we expect the outcome to discourage the adoption of protectionist trade policies that are disguised and biased against the various types of fossil fuels, especially petroleum products.

Madame President,

In line with its stated objective to protect the environment and as an extension of its role as a reliable energy supplier to power the world, Saudi Arabia, is undertaking many initiatives to promote the use of technological alternatives and to enact legislation to reduce emissions. Some of these initiatives can be summarized through the following efforts:

1 - The Kingdom has succeeded in using associated and natural gas in the industrial, electricity generation and seawater desalination sectors.

2 – The Kingdom has established King Abdullah City for Nuclear and Renewable Energy, to realize the vision of King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz by entering into widespread use of renewable energy sources, mainly solar energy. Our aim in this area is to broaden the use of this type of energy source in different economic sectors, enabling us to export the surplus of this type of clean energy to neighboring countries and become a major supplier of energy, not just oil. The establishment of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, complete research centers for

solar energy and cleaner fuels, is an important step in this direction. The Kingdom has recently become a party to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). In addition, the Kingdom has established The King Abdullah Center for Energy Efficiency, to reduce energy consumption.

In this regard, we would like to announce the launching of the world's largest solar-powered seawater desalination plant in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In conclusion, Madame President,

We would like to note that we will continue our efforts to achieve economic diversification and reduce our absolute dependence on the export of crude oil, and we need greater cooperation from the international community, through increased foreign investment and transfer of technology. These are essential means to minimize the potential negative impacts of policies to address climate change on petroleum producing countries.

I wish this conference all the success.

Thank you, Madame President