

Statement by the United States of America
on the Follow-on Process to Kyoto
AGBM Session
22 October 1997

Mr. Chairman: We appreciate very much the time and effort that has gone into producing the draft negotiating text before us, and the extensive consultations which you have conducted in seeking to move the negotiating process forward toward agreement in Kyoto. We are prepared to work with your text in our discussions here in Bonn, recognizing, however, that there is as yet no consensus on the elements of this text, and that it will be necessary to work diligently with all of our colleagues to craft provisions that can gain the broadest possible support. To this end, we anticipate announcing our own proposal for emissions budgets of Annex I countries shortly.

At the same time, Mr. Chairman, we are extremely disappointed that the text you have produced omits a fundamental provision of the proposal we made last January. As you will recall, the United States proposed that we adopt by 2005 binding provisions so that all Parties have quantified greenhouse gas emissions obligations and so that there is a mechanism for automatic application of progressive greenhouse gas emissions obligations to Parties, based on agreed criteria. We made this proposal for a specific article in the protocol in light of the reality that climate change is a global problem that can only be solved by a truly global response, recognizing our common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

In our view, this proposal is fully consistent with the Berlin Mandate -- it imposes no new substantive commitments on developing countries now. Instead, it calls for such obligations to be developed following the Third Conference of the Parties.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that the negotiations, which we earnestly hope will culminate in the conclusion of a protocol or another legal instrument in Kyoto in December, will be a critical part of a rolling series of negotiations that will be needed in the coming years to accommodate increased scientific knowledge and understanding of the problems associated with global warming. Our proposed text should be viewed in this light. In our view, the outcome in Kyoto will be unacceptable if we, as concerned nations of the world, fail to set in motion a process which recognizes the very real, global nature of the problem before us.

In paragraph three of the introduction to your revised draft, you indicate that the consolidated negotiating text will be presented to the AGBM for its consideration without prejudice to the earlier negotiating text and the original proposals from Parties contained in the relevant miscellaneous documents.

Accordingly, Mr. Chairman, we urge in the strongest possible terms that an article on this matter, such as the one contained in the U.S. proposal, be reinserted into the text in brackets and forwarded to the Third Conference of the Parties for its full consideration -- and, we expect, adoption -- in Kyoto.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.