



MISION PERMANENTE DEL PERU ANTE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR OSWALDO DE RIVERO
SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PERU
AT THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING
ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Port Louis, Mauritius

10-14 January 2005

Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to express the solidarity of the Government and the people of Peru with Governments and people of the Maldives, the Seychelles and all the Governments and peoples of the countries of South Asia and the Indian Ocean who have suffered the destructive effects of the recent Tsunami.

Today all the studies on natural disasters conclude that they cause more damage and claim more victims in developing countries. Indeed, poor countries lack the resources to warn and mitigate the devastating effects of earthquakes, hurricanes and tsunamis and at the same time are exposed to famine, as a result of droughts.

Among developing countries, some of the most vulnerable today are the Small Island Developing States because of their fragile ecological systems and because they are located in regions where natural environmental disasters occur more frequently and with more strength. Aware of their vulnerability, the Small Island Developing States are today the best example of cooperation across the international community on the issue of sustainable development.

Mr. President,

Peru, also a country with a fragile ecological system, shares the same ecological concerns as the Small Island Developing States and expresses its admiration and support for the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

My country, with more than 3,000 km of coastline on the Pacific Ocean, has suffered **and is likely to continue** to suffer **serious** physical, **economic and social** effects **as a result** of the **increasing** and devastating intensity of the Niño **phenomenon as a consequence** of Global Warming.

Recent Reports of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States affirm that during the twentieth century there were 23 disasters caused by the Niño phenomenon and the four strongest were after 1980. This trend towards an increase in the devastating effects of the Niño phenomenon will make it very probable that in the future there will be catastrophic damage to the agriculture and infrastructure of my country. This trend is also likely to lead to enormous humanitarian emergencies in Peru, given that today, 73% of the population is concentrated in the large cities along the coast.

Mr. President,

Recently, as a result of climate change we have seen a series of hurricanes in the Caribbean, stronger than ever before, and in the Pacific Ocean strong typhoons and more devastating occurrences of the

Niño phenomenon than in the past. Today, the increased evaporation of the planet's water, because of the rising temperature, has given rise to increased torrential rainfall and flooding in Asia, and at the same time this increased evaporation is leading to long-lasting droughts in Africa and South America. While some countries suffer the increased onslaught of hurricanes and torrential rainfall, others have to endure droughts, followed by famine.

Mr. President,

The present **increasing in frequency and in intensity of disasters as a result of climate change, like hurricanes, Niños, flooding and droughts followed by famine, are just the beginning of an avalanche of major hydrological disasters which will place international security at risk.**

This is not an alarmist forecast but the forecast of the recent Report of the High-Level Panel convened by the Secretary -General of the United Nations to study the Threats, Challenges and the Change in international security in the twenty -first century. The High-Level Panel identifies climate change and the dramatic increase in disasters over the last decade, as one of the new threats to international security.

This statement by the High-Level Panel, that global warming will affect international security is also now confirmed by a recent Pentagon report which admits, for the first time, that climate change will lead to shortages of water and food, shortages which will have a serious effect on international security.

Without doubt, Mr President, the intensification of hurricanes, the shrinking of glaciers and the increasing intensity of the Niño phenomenon, and the droughts around the world will have disastrous effects on access to water and food. Every day the scarcity of water is more evident in our planet and in the near future this will affect the production and the cost of food, which will fuel domestic and international tensions.

Without doubt, if we do not stabilize global warming, it will be a factor of socio-political instability for many Small Island States and also for ecologically vulnerable developing countries like Peru. For this reason, Mr. President, my delegation considers that one important conceptual contribution to the Conference of Mauritius could be to include in its Final Document, in accordance with the Report of the High Level Panel, that environmental degradation, climate change and the increase in disasters are today a new threat to international security.

Mr President,

In Peru public opinion is aware of the adverse effect of climate change on development and security. In this context we are carrying out important studies in order to identify our vulnerability regarding climate change and we are constructing climatic scenarios up to the year 2050. We are ready, Mr. President, to cooperate and exchange our experience with all the member states at this Conference.

Mr President,

My country is ready to work together with all countries with fragile ecological systems in order to redress the adverse effects of climate change, and also to act together to strengthen the Strategy for Disaster Reduction, as well as to mobilize support to obtain technical capacity to deal with secure access to water, to food and to clean and renewable energy.

Finally, Mr President, I would like to declare that Peru supports the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and will also support the Strategy approved by this Conference to implement this Programme of Action and stands ready to support all other initiatives of the Small Island Developing States towards sustainable development.

Thank you very much.