

*(NON OFFICIAL TRANSLATION)*

**STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR  
ECONOMIST RAFAEL CORREA DELGADO  
SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND  
GOVERNMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE  
New York, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009**

The Ecuadorian people are deeply committed to the fight against the effects of climate change. For us, the earth, nature, the physical environment, the Pachamama, as our Kichwa peoples call it, is an integral part of well-being, or Sumak Kawsay, a fundamental principle of our constitutional arrangement. We consider that respect to nature is respect towards ourselves; this is why we are the first nation in the world to declare nature as a subject of rights in the Constitution, all as a result of a democratic and participatory process.

We recognize the urgent need to address climate change, both by reducing its causes and by combating its effects. As such, we are investing public funds in concrete actions framed within the national development plan.

The Socio Bosque Program provides economic incentives to the most needed stakeholders, based on criteria related to conservation of environmental services, reduction of deforestation and poverty alleviation. It will allow us to protect 30% of the total national forest cover by 2015.

We are implementing a program to change the energy grid, which aims towards a larger contribution of renewable and sustainable energy sources, combating the financial, environmental and ethical crisis at its roots. In the Galapagos Islands, a Natural Patrimony of Humanity, unique for its biodiversity and endemism, we are developing the Zero Fossil Fuel project, with the main objective being to operate on 100% clean energy initiatives by 2015.

The sovereign decision to maintain our largest oil reserves underground further illustrates the commitment of the Ecuadorian people with equity, solidarity and social, environmental, and ecological justice. This Initiative will bring three main benefits to the world: 1) avoided contamination, 2) the protection of the indigenous peoples and nationalities that inhabit the Yasuni National Park; and 3) the conservation of biodiversity.

Within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the only forum where decisions will be made on the subject, Ecuador asks for fair negotiations, based on the recognition of diversity. Only such a negotiation process will guide us towards a common outcome, feasible for humanity. This is a matter of historical responsibility with humanity, nature and with the present

and future generations. The process must be based on the respect of human rights, labor rights and the rights of indigenous communities and Afro-descendants, as well as those of local communities and those living in poverty conditions.

We see this time of crisis as an opportunity to radicalize changes that will allow our societies, currently based on competition and on irrational and unsustainable consumption, which puts goods before people, to transform into societies centered on the harmony of the human being with itself, his peers and with nature.

These changes should recognize the right to development, and the high vulnerability of countries like Ecuador to the impacts of climate change. At a national level, we are not only taking mitigation actions, but also adaptation measures. However, without a real and sufficiently ambitious commitment from developed countries, our determination will not be enough.

In this sense, we demand that Annex 1 countries achieve and intensify the commitments they acquired in the Framework Convention and in the Kyoto Protocol, in relation to adaptation, mitigation, development and transfer of technology, and financing. We must act jointly and urgently to address this global emergency.

Eloy Alfaro, the most visionary of Ecuadorian statisticians, warned, us about one hundred years ago: "in delay, lies danger". This sentence applies to the problems related to climate change: let us not continue with the devastation of the planet, let us not run out of time to defend life, let us never forget that tomorrow starts today.