

UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL EVENT
ON CLIMATE CHANGE
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STATEMENT BY
Ms DORA BAKOYIANNIS
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC

Our generation has the privilege to be living during a green revolution. It is becoming clear to everyone that the planet needs us if our way of life is to continue in the future. The responsibility for this lies in each and every one of us. As environmentalism is fast becoming mainstream so is the need for governments and policy makers not to let this era of promise pass.

The challenge of climate change in particular can only be tackled by immediate action. In the midst of the current economic crisis we are presented with further complications at this critical juncture. The way forward lies in recognizing our era as a unique opportunity to balance the relationship between the economy and the environment as a whole.

In this context, Greece, along with its EU partners, aspires to *an ambitious, all-inclusive climate change agreement in Copenhagen in December*. An agreement which will set clear, time framed and sufficient reductions in global emissions, both from industrialized nations and from rapidly growing economies.

A new comprehensive global agreement including:

- clear commitments for reduction of emissions from all UN Framework Convention of Climate Change Annex I countries.
- provisions for emissions reductions from deforestation
- and for efficient monitoring, reporting and verification mechanisms.

Here we welcome the recent commitments made by the G8 leaders in L'Aquila, that give new momentum to our future negotiations in Copenhagen.

On the issue of financing the new global agreement on climate change, Greece supports the establishment of an efficient, predictable, just and transparent financial mechanism. This will be made possible by the financial contributions of all countries in support. Each contribution needs to depend on the country's ability to pay and its responsibility for emissions. We will also seek to make sure the Kyoto Protocol's Adaptation Fund becomes fully operational.

On the issue of financial assistance to developing countries to tackle climate change, Greece continues to strongly support the financing of climate change adaptation and mitigation projects and of low carbon development strategies.

We have repeatedly proven our commitment to this effect, by supporting the most vulnerable countries adapt to climate change.

By 2011 Greece will provide a total sum of 21 million euros benefiting:

- the African Union;
- CARICOM for scientific cooperation, management of potable water, infrastructure works, technical improvement of meteorological stations
- AOSIS for rainwater harvesting
- the Indian Ocean Committee for climate change vulnerability, risk assessment, adaptation and mitigation.

In Africa we are also cooperating with the UN World Meteorological Organization to support climate change adaptation through the improvement of weather and climate monitoring networks.

We believe that, international financial assistance aside, climate change projects could also be financed domestically by public financial support or private financial flows. For this reason, Greece favors the use of revenues from auctioning emissions allowances to support implementation of climate change projects and activities in developing countries.

Finally, from a national standpoint, Greece aims to achieve the already set EU goals of cutting greenhouse gases by 20% of their 1990 levels, reducing energy consumption by 20% and meeting 20% of its energy needs from renewable sources, until 2020.

To meet our Kyoto climate change mitigation targets we stand ready, along with our EU partners, to commit to a 30% reduction of emissions until 2020, if a fair and effective agreement is achieved in Copenhagen.

Our intention is also to continue our development assistance programme for climate change adaptation and mitigation in the most vulnerable countries of the world.

Top priorities of our national environmental and energy planning are:

- to build resilience to natural disasters
- to accelerate investments in low-carbon and renewable energy technologies, with increased emphasis on energy efficiency,
- to achieve the reduction and localization of our energy demand.

At the same time, we continue to raise domestic and international awareness for climate change. through initiatives such as

- the focus on women and children as the most vulnerable groups to climate change, during our 2008 Human Security Network chairmanship
- the “greening of the OSCE” as we hold this year’s Chairmanship of the organization.

Today I am in a position to say that my country is taking steps in the right direction to combat climate change. We recognize that as the responsibility for the state of our planet is shared by all, developed states and emerging economies alike, so the solution has to come from all. Our philosophy is that global consensus and

cooperation is how we will spring communities and societies into action to protect our planet. In December all eyes will be turned towards Copenhagen. We should not let this unique opportunity pass. It is this generation's duty and call to safeguard our planet for our children.