



**Thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13) and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 3)  
Bali, 12 December 2007**

**Statement at the high-level segment by Yvo de Boer  
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Mister President,  
Mister Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come together at this conference at the cusp of an incredible year for climate change. The heyday of the climate skeptic has been put to rest once and for all, and political momentum and global public awareness for climate change have never been higher.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has come with a message that no one can fail to understand:

1. First, the science is clear: climate change is happening because of human activities.
2. Second, the impacts are serious and will be felt by everyone in one way or another. The poor will bear the largest burden.
3. And third, there are affordable ways to deal with the problem. Concerted action NOW can avoid some of the most catastrophic projections.

What does that second message really mean?

In terms of water stress, it means that:

- By 2020, between 75 and 250 million people in Africa are projected to be exposed to increased water stress due to climate change.

- By the 2050s, freshwater availability for millions in Asia will be threatened, because glaciers that provide drinking water are melting.

In terms of sea-level rise, it means that:

- One tenth of the global population lives in coastal areas that lie within just 10 metres above sea level and are exposed to seaward hazards such as flooding, storms and cyclones.
- Sea-level rise will threaten major cities around the globe, from Alexandria to Hamburg, Lagos, Los Angeles, Jakarta, Shanghai and others. Sixteen of the world's nineteen largest cities with populations above 10 million, are located on coastlines.
- Sea-level rise will wipe Small Island Developing States off the map.

So where does this leave human kind? What does this mean for people's lives and survival? How many millions of people and how much capital will be condemned to follow Atlantis? The beginning of the answer to these questions lies in the award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

If you fail to act, the consequences of climate change can plunge the world into conflict. In 2010, there could already be as many as 50 million Environmentally Displaced Persons due to climate change, desertification and deforestation. Competing for water, energy and food can lead to ethnic rivalry and regional conflicts.

There have been studies on the link between climate change and security, including for military planning purposes.

So, how can it be, that Defence Ministries are actively planning for climate change impacts, while preventive action, is not taken?

How can it be, that security is being considered ahead of establishing policy certainty for economic actors to provide the solution?

I am shocked that some people are saying that delivering on what the IPCC tells us is needed is akin to science fiction!

To meet the drastic increase in the world's hunger for energy, a massive investment of 20 trillion USD is needed up to 2030. More than half of these investments are required in developing countries, where energy is needed for economic growth. Up to 86% of these investments will come from the private sector.

If we do not succeed in changing the course of this investment super tanker into a low-emissions direction, global emissions will increase by 50% in 2050 - instead of decreasing by 50%, which is what science tells us is needed.

So, sound science must be translated into clear policy. Clear policy must be translated into sound practice. Business is ready to move into the low-emissions era, but needs the appropriate policy framework from governments to do so.

To go back to science fiction, we must make the leap forward, or be condemned to the “Planet of the Apes”.

- The challenge you face is to show that we can indeed turn that corner.
- The challenge you face, is to tell the world that you want to change the direction of the world’s future into a low-emissions economy. An economics-based response to climate change will yield numerous, tangible economic gains for all.
- The challenge you face is to prove to people that you are serious about adaptation to the unavoidable.

You can begin doing this in three simple ways:

1. Launch formal negotiations
2. Agree an ambitious agenda
3. Set 2009 as the deadline for negotiations

We simply cannot afford to fail our people by leaving this unique island without convergence of science and politics.

Bowing out of this is something we cannot even begin to explain to those who are looking to us to provide solutions to this global threat. You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today. (Lincoln)

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