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UNCED [United Nations Conference on Environment and Development] - Climate Change

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CAN POINTS

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The Climate Convention deferred decisions vital to its effective implementation to the first meeting of the Parties. Not the least of these decisions are binding commitments to actual reductions in greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the objective of the Convention. It is important that INC 6 commence a "prompt start" before entry into force. This includes adoption of a prioritized program of work and a related organizational structure.

As the INC moves into this new phase, new organizational arrangements are required, e.g., reconstituted working or cluster groups on common themes. In presenting the report on climate by the Secretary General of the United Nations to the Second Committee of the General Assembly this fall, the INC Executive Secretary noted that there are two keys to success of the Convention; namely, the review by the first Conference of the Parties of the adequacy of industrialized country commitments (which may lead to amendment of their commitments) and adoption of a well-funded and well functioning financial mechanism. This suggests at least two new working groups, one on commitments and one on financing. A third working group could be assigned responsibility for mechanisms and institutional matters relating to e.g., the Secretariat, reporting, rules of procedure and resolution of questions. We strongly believe that these working groups and a general program of work must be established at INC 6 so that substantive efforts can be initiated at INC 7 (possibly as early as March at UN Headquarters in New York).

By the June anniversary of signature of the Climate Convention, minimum goals should include: 1) completion of draft industrialized country action plans, and a meeting held thereon; 2) commencement negotiations on a protocol or protocols to the Convention, and 3) disbursement of the first round of financial assistance to developing country signatories.

CAN recommendations:

Seek Immediate Ratification

The treaty has now been signed by 158 countries and the European Community, yet only seven countries have formally ratified it. In order for the treaty to enter into force, fifty ratifications are required. We support the efforts of the INC Secretariat to work with the signatories to assure the fastest possible entry into force and to provide technical assistance as may be necessary to facilitate expeditious ratification. The signatories should aim for entry into force by January 1, 1994.

Establish a Working Group on Commitments

I. Industrialized Country Commitments

The treaty requires that the first Conference of the parties (COP) review the adequacy of the commitments text (Article 4(2)(a) and (b)) and consider adoption of amendments to this text. This text reflects a difficult compromise reached to ensure that the Climate Treaty would be ready for signature at Rio. We urge the immediate initiation of a process for reviewing and revising this text. In particular, we call upon the industrialized countries to set a two year target date (no later than the first COP) for adopting a protocol to bring about a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2005. A similar two year target date - agreed to in a resolution adopted with the Vienna Convention - created the international momentum to negotiate and adopt the Montreal Protocol even before the Convention entered into force. There is no reason for parties to wait until the Climate Treaty enters into force.

Articles 4.2.(b) and 12.2. of the treaty require detailed reporting by developed country parties

on their measures and policies (national plans) to implement their specific commitments under Article 4.2(a) and (b). Developed countries should commit to preparing national plans in accordance with agreed criteria by June 1, 1993. At a minimum, these national plans should ensure that each developed country's greenhouse gas emissions are capped at 1990 levels by the year 2000. We also recommend that the OECD countries use the OECD as a forum for coordinating their policies to mitigate climate change.

II. Agreed Methodologies for Implementing the Treaty

The treaty requires that the parties adopt agreed methodologies for compiling emissions inventories (Art. 12.1(a)), monitoring and verifying reductions through joint implementation (Art. 4.2(d)), and calculating "net" emissions (Art. 4.2(c)). The latter two articles are required to be addressed by the first COP and common methodologies for inventories should also be agreed at the first COP. In order to ensure that emission reductions are real and enforceable, it is imperative that there be common methodologies for reporting greenhouse gas removal due to protection and enhancement of sinks and for meeting commitments through "joint implementation" with other countries. These methodologies and related criteria must ensure that there are no sham transactions, provide for verifiability, and protect other significant socio-economic and equity concerns. On all of these issues there should be a firm public review process.

We also urge that work begin to set a baseline for emissions of greenhouse gases for countries with economies in transition. While the treaty does not require the first COP to act on this issue, it is critical that this issue be considered in tandem with other questions of methodologies and matters, including joint implementation, related to evaluating the implementation of industrialized country commitments. (See Article 4.6.)

Establish a Financing Working Group

Article 21 provides that the GEF shall be the interim financing mechanism. It further provides that the GEF should be appropriately restructured and its membership made universal to enable the GEF to meet the requirements of Article 11 on the financial mechanism. The first COP was called upon to make arrangements to implement Article 11. At best the Convention created a confused situation with respect to the role and responsibilities of its Conference of Parties and subsidiary bodies to the GEF. The INC should act forcefully to clarify those ambiguities and to assert the primacy of the Conference of the Parties and articulate the roles of its subsidiary bodies in reviewing financial assistance programs such as the subsidiary body for scientific and technological advice.

Article 11 does not require the first COP to make any final decisions on the financing mechanism nor does it mandate that a "gef" however restructured need be the eventual financing mechanism. The COP is free to select from a number of options. The INC should unequivocally call for an open and independent review of the GEF pilot phase before any decisions are taken by the Conference of the Parties to formally designate a revised GEF as the financing mechanism. The Conference of the Parties prerogatives should not be prejudged by the World Bank nor by GEF Participants meetings. In particular, the INC should explore models such as the Montreal Protocol Multilateral Fund.

The INC should play a lead role in defining what are "agreed full incremental costs" in relationship to developed country assistance to developing countries. Developed country parties are obligated to provide developing country parties with financial resources necessary to meet such costs in implementing the general commitments of Article 4.1. The COP has a dominant role to play in this regard and therefore it would be helpful if this and other related terms are clearly defined before final decisions are made on a financing mechanism.

Further, the INC should clarify what is meant in Article 4.2(a) which states that Annex I parties

may assist other parties in contributing to the achievement of the objective of the Convention. This must not result in developed countries receiving credit for emissions reductions resulting from their bilateral assistance programs nor their exceeding 1990 levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the year 2000.

Finally, interim arrangements should be made to provide immediate assistance to developing country signatories in meeting requirements to prepare national inventories and in meeting the general commitments of Article 4 para 1.

Establish a Mechanisms and Institutions Working Group

Consistent with Article 13, the INC should expeditiously prepare recommendations establishing verification, monitoring and compliance procedures relating to implementation of the Convention. In this regard it should also identify modalities for effective links to other relevant international bodies such as the IPCC, the World Bank and the Commission on Sustainable Development. In addition, work should continue on creating a strong and catalytic Secretariat for the Convention.

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EARTH SUMMIT

CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

**United Nations
Conference on
Environment and
Development**

**Rio de Janeiro
Brazil
3-14 June 1992**



UNITED NATIONS

FINAL TEXT