

Climate Action Network (CAN) Intervention
COP7
Thursday, 8 November 2001
Lydia Popova, Socio-Ecological Union

Mr. President, esteemed delegates, dear colleagues. My name is Lydia Popova. I represent the Russian environmental NGO the Socio-Ecological Union, an umbrella organization for more than 350 groups. My organisation is also one of the focal points of the global Climate Action Network (CAN). CAN represents over 330 citizen groups from six continents, with more than 10 million members. I appreciate the opportunity to speak at this distinguished meeting on their behalf.

10 years ago at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, nations recognized that the global climate is threatened by human activity, and that countries must take actions to protect our planet. The Framework Convention on Climate Change envisages that countries will work jointly to fulfill their obligations to combat climate change.

It took three years after Rio for the Climate Convention to enter into force. It took two more years to design and adopt the Kyoto Protocol. Since Kyoto it seems that the negotiations have slowed down with every meeting. But the first commitment period starts in 2008, and time is very short. I see environmental concerns which inspired the Climate Convention in 1992 being diluted in politics. Meanwhile the climate of our planet is deteriorating each year, and it is the poorest nations which suffer most from floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, and other disturbances caused by climate change. These phenomena are usually accompanied by hunger and epidemic diseases.

It is now time to stop talking about the necessity of urgent actions, and really start the actions. We urge ministers to add real political will to negotiations at COP7 and to commit to ratification and entry into force of the Kyoto protocol no later than next year, prior to the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002. A full set of implementation rules for the Kyoto protocol must be adopted here, in Marrakech at COP7. In order to finalize these rules, we believe that a few important issues must be resolved at the high level segment.

First, regarding the flexible mechanisms, as agreed in Bonn in July, eligibility criteria for all three mechanisms must include a requirement to accept the compliance system. In terms of sinks, the Bonn Agreement should not be re-opened, and countries should not change numbers on sinks before the next commitment period. In articles 5, 7, 8, annual reporting on Articles 3.3 and 3.4 sinks in the national inventories is necessary to provide transparency, and sinks credits must not be carried into the next commitment period.

We are grateful to the negotiators for the completion of the compliance text. We believe that inclusion of measures to facilitate implementation will encourage early domestic actions and reduce the chances of non-compliance. It is important that countries keen to participate in flexible mechanisms follow the procedures of the compliance regime, which is essential to provide security and assurances to investors.

The decisions to be agreed here will create new bodies, and much information: the Annex 6 supervisory committee, the CDM Executive Board, emissions inventories and monitoring data: all of this should be open to the public, and information made available through the internet, in local fora and various languages, in order to engage the public in a meaningful way, and to benefit from their participation.

My country, along with its neighbors in Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States, is undergoing a profound transition. This transition has resulted in substantial changes in

economic and political structures – demilitarization of industry and science, introduction of elements of market economy, emergence of a variety of new players on the political arena. Along with economic recession, this has resulted in significant reduction in greenhouse gas pollution in recent years. Still, Russia is one of the largest emmitters of greenhouse gases, and its participation in the Kyoto Protocol is crucial. The climate issue is relevant to Russia both because of the direct impacts on its ecosystems and for the opportunity to contribute to climate change mitigation through its vast energy conservation potential.

Russia will benefit from implementation of the Kyoto protocol. Participation in flexible mechanisms will help to attract new investments to Russia, into the energy sector, which can improve energy efficiency. For this to happen, Russia must support a solid compliance regime. I should like to emphasize that the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, at his meeting with EU presidency Mr. Verhofstadt in early October this year stated that Russia and the EU “will work together for the full implementation [of the Kyoto Protocol] with a view to early ratification and entry into force...”.

The final point I would like to make is that COP7 should provide concrete recommendations to the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg next year. A full 10 years after Rio, it's time we turn our aspirations into reality.

Thank you, Mr. President.