



UNEP

Opening Remarks by

Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell

Executive Director

United Nations Environment Programme

at the

6th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol

Nairobi, 6 October 1994

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my very great pleasure to welcome you all to Nairobi at the opening of the deliberations of the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol.

Mr. President, the last time we met here was in June 1991 for the Third Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. Since then, the Montreal Protocol has grown from strength to strength both in terms of number of countries ratifying the protocol and the actual implementation of its provisions.

You would recall that when we met here in Nairobi in 1991 there were only 78 Parties to the Vienna Convention and 71 Parties to the Montreal Protocol. The London Amendment to the Montreal Protocol had only been ratified by 2 Parties and was yet to enter into force.

Three years later, we are a witness to a continuous increase in the number of Parties that have ratified these three legal instruments.

We in UNEP are also proud to have facilitated the birth and nurturing of yet another important legal instrument - the Copenhagen Amendment to the Montreal Protocol that was concluded at Copenhagen in November 1992.

As I speak to you now, 139 Parties have already ratified the Montreal protocol. The London Amendment to the Protocol has 93 Parties while the Copenhagen Amendment which entered into force in June this year has already been ratified by 34 Parties.

Mr. President,

I would like to say a few words about the Copenhagen Amendment to the Montreal Protocol. This amendment has been important in two respects. It is through this instrument that at the end of 1993, developed countries completely ceased production and consumption of halons - the first ozone depleting substances whose production has been eliminated. This was made possible by the availability of sufficient quantity and quality of halons from the existing stocks of banked and recycled halons. In fact, there may not even be a need for the developing countries to continue producing halons if recycled supplies and substitutes are made available to these countries.

The other important point emanating from this amendment is the prospect of completely eliminating production and consumption of CFCs by all Parties not operating under Article 5 of the Protocol at the end of 1995.

This is a goal you set for yourself in Copenhagen. And I have reasons to be optimistic that it will be achieved with only a very limited production for a handful of essential uses.

I would therefore urge all the countries that have not yet ratified the Montreal Protocol and its Amendments to do so as soon as possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A new scientific assessment of the state of understanding of ozone depletion released on 6 September 1994 reveals that the rate of build-up in the atmosphere of human-made substances that deplete the ozone layer has slowed in recent years as a direct result of reductions in global emissions of these substances. The scientific experts attribute this to the reduction of the impact of anthropogenic halocarbons on the ozone layer.

I have no hesitation in saying that this reduction can be attributed directly to the measures taken by the Parties under the Montreal Protocol and its Amendments.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Co-Chairs of the Scientific Assessment Panel and all the scientific experts from 29 countries who assisted in the preparation of this assessment under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Meteorological Organization. I would also like to thank the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel and its Technical Options Committees whose comprehensive and constructive recommendations have enabled the Open-ended Working Group to recommend to you for approval only those nominations for essential uses of controlled substances endorsed by the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel. The Environmental Effects Assessment Panel has done excellent work and is also deserving of our thanks.

The positive results of the scientific assessment done by the Scientific Assessment Panel should, however, not make us complacent. Let us not forget that the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances is not yet secured and many difficulties still lie ahead.

We are looking forward to the reports of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel and the Environmental Effects Assessment Panel which are due to be issued next month in order to see how far we have advanced in the other two areas.

However on technology, I am encouraged by the success of the Essential Use Process you approved at your Fourth Meeting in Copenhagen in 1992 and to which I briefly referred to in the beginning of my speech.

I would like to strongly recommend to this meeting that only such essential uses based on the technical and economical feasibility of using substitutes be approved.

The need to protect our environment should override the demands of political expediency.

This meeting could, however, authorize production for essential uses for the time intervals recommended by the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel. At the same time you could also demand annual review of quantities produced and biennial review of the essentiality of controlled substances. In this regard, I would request all parties to report to the Secretariat, national methods of minimizing use and emissions from authorized essential uses.

Excellencies,

The battle for the preservation of the ozone layer rages on. Significant challenges exist in retrofitting existing air conditioning and refrigerant systems and in managing ODS banks for servicing existing equipment.

We continue to need the services of the most knowledgeable scientists and technical experts for the work of the assessment panels and option committees. Governments must support the participation of these experts, especially those from the academia, if the parties are to have the benefit of the best Assessment Reports.

I see no reason why we cannot overcome these problems by manifesting the same strong political commitment that has been displayed in the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

You have before you the data report for the year 1992 which shows that, out of the 88 Parties required to report data 73 Parties fulfilled this requirement. For the year 1993, Parties had until 30 September 1994 to report their data. It is unfortunate that only 46 Parties have reported their data till 30 September out of 114 that were required to submit their reports.

I wish to congratulate all those parties who have fulfilled their data reporting requirements in time.

The objectives that we set for ourselves in the Montreal Protocol and its Amendments can only be achieved if all the Parties fully participate in its implementation. Once again, I wish to make an earnest appeal to all the Parties that have not yet reported their data on controlled substances to do so as soon as possible.

The successful implementation of the Montreal Protocol is contingent upon the timely availability of financial resources among other things. In this context, I wish to bring to the attention of this meeting the alarming trend in the contributions still outstanding to the Multilateral Fund and the Trust Funds for the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol. Inadequate payment of assessed contributions to the Multilateral Fund by Parties may not only affect the approval but also the eventual implementation of several projects and other programs to phase out ozone-depleting substances.

The Trust Fund for the Multilateral Fund is currently owed U.S.\$ 137 million in outstanding contributions for 1994 alone; while U.S \$ 52 million remains unpaid for the previous years.

At your fifth meeting in Bangkok, a year ago, you committed yourself to contribute U.S \$ 510 million over the period spanning 1994 - 1996. However, only U.S \$ 31 million out of the budgeted U.S \$ 218 million for 1994 has been paid as of 30 September 1994.

These trends make me apprehensive that the entire balance of payments will not be fully honored within the agreed period.

You are all aware that the Executive Committee cannot approve any project to phase out ozone depleting substances without the cash on hand.

I would like to urge all the Parties to pay their entire outstanding contributions to the Multilateral Fund as soon as possible. Outstanding contributions to the other two Trust Funds for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol and the Vienna Convention currently stand at U.S.\$ 3 million and U.S \$ 500,000 respectively. Without making good your assessed contributions, many programs and planned meetings such as this one cannot take place. Prompt payment of your assessed contributions will help in avoiding the disruption of many activities designed to implement the decisions which you have previously approved and those you will be approving in this meeting.

We in UNEP appreciate the economic problems facing countries with economies in transition. Some of these countries have expressed difficulties in meeting their financial obligations under the Montreal Protocol. However, there have been on-going consultations on how these countries can pay their contributions and at the same time receive assistance from the Global Environmental Facility in order to phase out ozone depleting substances. As a first step, UNEP in cooperation with UNDP, UNIDO and the World Bank successfully organized a three-day workshop on the implementation of the Montreal Protocol from 15-17 August 1994 in Minsk, Belarus. The workshop was attended by participants from Governments and NGOs of CIS, the Baltic States and Mongolia.

The purpose of the workshop was to encourage these countries to ratify the ozone treaties and introduce them the financial, legal and technical assistance available to them in order to implement the Montreal Protocol.

UNEP will be implementing the recommendations of this workshop along with UNDP and the World Bank in assisting the countries with economies in transition to phase out ozone-depleting substances.

Another important regional workshop related to the practical implementation of the Montreal Protocol was organized under the auspices of UNEP by the South African Government in association with the Government of Swaziland. The workshop took place in Swaziland from 29-31 August 1994. This workshop, the first of its kind under the new democratic South Africa, drew participants from 12 other African countries.

UNEP supports this regional initiative for technological cooperation and will be following up on the recommendations of the workshop.

In 1995, 15 country programmes, 15 institutional strengthening projects and 95 investment projects were approved under the Multilateral funds. These programmes and projects are in 55 countries operating under Article 5. These projects represented \$ 91 million, bringing the total disbursement to date to \$ 207.8 million. A total of 42,000 tonnes of ozone-depleting substances will be phased out as a result of these investments.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The recommendations before you have come from the Preparatory Meeting that met here in Nairobi from Monday until yesterday. These include the status of certain parties with regard to Article 5 of the Protocol, situation of country Parties with economies in transition, reviews under paragraph 8 of Article 5 of the Protocol and under section II, paragraph IV/18 of the Fourth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, essential use nominations of controlled substances for 1995 and beyond, use of controlled substances as process agents, clarification of "quarantine" and "pre-shipment" applications for control of methyl bromide, list of products containing controlled substances in Annex B of the Protocol, juridical personality, privileges and immunities of the Multilateral Fund and matters relating to budgets and finance.

I do hope that the recommendations of the Open-ended Working Group and the preparatory Meeting on all these issues will be approved by this meeting.

Even as we are on the eve of the successful phase-out of the production of several of the ozone-depleting substances, we cannot let down our vigilance. Let me list some challenges which I think are particularly urgent.

We need renewed and innovative efforts at information sharing, capacity building and technology transfer to developing countries. Such technologies should be ozone-safe and we must move away from HCFCs wherever possible. We must work together to see that the developing countries do not become wedded to obsolete technologies. Increased production in these countries could nullify the gains made by the phaseout in developed countries.

We need contributions to the trust funds and Multilateral Funds to be made more quickly. Only with a functioning Multilateral Fund and Ozone Secretariat can we ensure that the Montreal Protocol is a partnership between all the nations who have signed this treaty.

We need faster action by the implementing agencies of the Multilateral Fund. Countries who contribute to that fund are not happy when they see that the money has not been spent for on the ground actions to move toward the use of suitable alternatives.

Finally, we need to make certain that we take decisive actions on the HCFCs and methyl bromide. These chemicals are also ozone depleters and any significant growth in their use could erase much of the benefits of our phase-out actions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have registered substantial success in our efforts to phase-out ozone-depleting substances. At the risk of sounding repetitive, I would again say that this is not the time to be complacent. The urgency and global cooperation that we have displayed together in the past needs to be manifested again, albeit in a greater degree. If we do this I am sure that we can succeed.

* * * * *