

speech



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Speech 1992/26

Closing Remarks by Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba  
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To the 4th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol  
On Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Copenhagen, 25 November 1992

Your Excellencies, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The measures you have passed here make the Montreal Protocol one of - if not the strongest package of global environmental law ever enacted.

The question which remains is this: Is it enough?

We are in the hands of scientists. From them -- and we have sought advice from the best in the world -- we know that the answer is 'No'. This package is not enough. The process of protecting the ozone layer is not at an end.

You have made progress, much progress, but you still have far to go. And you cannot rest until the ozone layer is safe.

The greatest achievement of this meeting is that it has prepared the way for more vigorous control measures.

And the Fund has been secured, and with it the continued active participation of the developing countries.

I am sure we all look forward to the day when all ozone-depleting substances are eliminated completely. Industry has been quite co-operative in dealing with the ozone problem. We thank them for this. But the signals to them are clear. We want to see the second generation of substitute chemicals and technology -- those which have no ozone-depleting potential, and no global warming potential.

Ladies and gentlemen.

For the progress that has been made, we must give thanks.

First of all, thanks to you, the representatives of Governments. Consensus -- that most unsatisfying and frustrating of all political process -- has always served us well. And you have upheld it. There are those of you who would have moved faster. There are those who are still hesitant. All are on board. All have given ground in the interest of making progress immediately. All of you deserve thanks. Special thanks go to Amb. Ristimaki, Amb. Mateos, Mr. Steve Lee Bapty, Eileen Claussen - Chairpersons of your Ad Hoc Working Group and the Executive Committee of the Fund as well as to the Chairpersons of Assessment Panels for most outstanding performances.

Thanks to you, Mr. President, for your very effective leadership and for the decisive role you played among your colleagues from the third world. Thanks to your colleagues on the Bureau who worked so much in harmony throughout the meeting.

Thanks to the Government of Denmark, and especially to Minister Stig Moller who has been enormously supportive, and who has played a crucial role in achieving today's consensus. Thanks to the hundreds of Danes who have, in their quiet, friendly and efficient way provided enormous help to us all.

Thanks also to the NGOs, who have been very vocal -- and rightly so -- on a number of issues of principle. They have an important role to play, and they have played it well.

Ladies and gentlemen.

My own involvement in this issue is nearing an end. It gives me no satisfaction to watch the accelerating rate of ozone depletion. But it gives me more satisfaction than you can know to see how the world community once again, under the environment banner, coming together again to deal with a common threat. It is very rewarding to see how our collective effort has led to a fundamental and lasting change in international relations. The slogans of inter-generational equity, of the precautionary principle, and of interdependence -- they are becoming reality.

To those of you I have worked with, for almost two decades, to achieve what we have today, thank you.