

Speech by M. Jean-Louis BORLOO, French Minister of State, Minister for Ecology, Energy,
Sustainable Development and Town and Country Planning

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Thank you for allowing me to be here, once again, in Nairobi. It is a great pleasure and honour for me to be amongst you today. I would also particularly like to thank Kenya and South Africa.

I have three things, in particular, I would like to say:

Firstly, having presided over a European agreement and personally dedicated to the success of Copenhagen, I have noticed that the overall atmosphere is quite different to that of last year. President Obama and the Chinese government are equally convinced that we are at a crucial turning point for the future of our planet.

Secondly, we mustn't stray from the Bali road map. Industrialized countries made commitments that they have to respect. And if any one country falls behind schedule, the other Annex 1 countries should make up for it. This concerns all of us as industrialized countries. We know that the Americans have a problem with the schedule, but it is up to us, the industrialized countries as a whole, to agree on a reduction curve, in agreement with Bali.

Thirdly, Africa is strong when it is united. And I am pleased to see the increasing importance of Africa in the Copenhagen negotiations. To use a sporting metaphor, many matches are won during training sessions. It's the same with Copenhagen. We have to be ready. In other words, we need to have concrete projects to put on the table, country by country. Africans need to be the main beneficiaries of forthcoming Copenhagen agreements.

We will undoubtedly reach an agreement on a financial framework. Moreover, at the recent meeting of the Major Economies Forum, held this week in Paris, a convergence emerged in favour of the Mexican proposal for a universal fund that is supported by

¹ AMCEN: African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.

contributions based on the emissions and the wealth of countries. But we should be wary of abstract concepts. Financing will go to projects and programmes. The important thing, therefore, is to propose them and to have prepared them.

I see three priority areas for these programmes: water, energy and forests.

I know the extent to which Africa is concerned about adapting to climate change: the issue of water and the fight against desertification are crucial. I heard my colleague from Senegal once again refer to the Great Green Wall. I noted the strong concern you have expressed about food safety, land management and agricultural adaptation. I am pleased to see here José Endundo and the COMIFAC² countries which have managed to preserve forests in Central Africa better than in Asia or Latin America. These forests now contribute to the stabilisation of the climate and therefore their preservation should be financed.

Yes, adaptation is essential. But let us not forget that development is the first condition for any progress. And there is no development without energy. This is why France, with its European partners, has proposed an initiative. This initiative involves access to energy for all Africans within one generation. Let us think about the potential of Africa as regards renewable energy, geothermal power, solar power stations in the Sahara, water resources of the Congo basin, wind on the western coast, and let us not forget energy for cooking and the daily task of gathering wood which binds so many African women.

In Copenhagen, the international community will not refuse to finance the programme of adaptation and sustainable development for Africa. To prepare these programmes and road maps, we are ready to provide the necessary experts, without, of course, wanting to impose. Let us work today, hand-in-hand, so that Copenhagen is the meeting-place for development in Africa.

² COMIFAC: Commission for the Forests of Central Africa.