

Statement

By

**H.E. Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn
Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic
Republic of Ethiopia on behalf of the African
Group**

At

COP-18

**04 December 2012
Doha, Qatar**

**H. E. Mr. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah,
President of COP 18,
Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Excellencies Ministers and Ambassadors,
Delegates from all the Parties,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me, at the outset, to thank our gracious host, the people and Government of Qatar, for the warm reception we have enjoyed since our arrival and for the excellent facilities put at our disposal. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to our ministers and experts who have, through their dedication and hard work, kept the implementation of our convention alive.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am addressing this Assembly from this podium as an African spokesperson on climate change - a task which I have assumed following the renewal of the mandate by the African Heads of State and Government that was bestowed upon the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia and my dear brother, H.E. Mr. Meles Zenawi.

The passing away of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is a huge loss not only for us, Ethiopians, but also for Africa. He was a man of remarkable intellect, who worked tirelessly for Africans to own and protect their development strategies. And, as most of you distinguished delegates involved in climate change negotiations since Copenhagen remember, Mr. Meles Zenawi diligently fought for Africa by bringing to the forefront its challenges and voicing the demand of the continent to be fully compensated for the damage it has incurred because of the effects of climate change.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It goes without saying that we need all the friendliness and efficiency that we can muster to deal with this impending man-made catastrophe that we call climate change. It has now become a common phenomenon to witness the regular occurrences of natural calamities in many parts of the world, most of which simply relate to the effects of climate change. What is even more worrisome is that its repercussions grow dramatically, both in frequency and magnitude.

Now that the inevitability of its effects is clear to all of us, we have no alternative except to change our relationship with nature. We must accept the limit to our negative impacts on it. Or else, the comfort that we look for through development will end up in our demise and in the hastened extinction of many species.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In Durban last year, we made progress in moving the climate change negotiations forward. We made important decisions that are critical to addressing the impact of climate change.

The decisions we took in Durban, I believe, are the results of our long years of deliberations. Here in Doha, we have a collective responsibility to keep the momentum and move forward in addressing the whole gamut of the climate challenge.

We, Africans, are perfectly aware of the significant political issues that remain to be resolved among different regions of the world; and we do not underestimate the challenge. But we are of the view that these issues should not cloud matters that are less controversial. Most importantly, these issues should not be used as instruments at the negotiation tables to backslide from the decision we have taken thus far. Prolonging negotiations can only result in exacerbating the pain and suffering of many millions in developing countries, particularly Africans whose livelihoods are being negatively affected by the effects of climate change. Our deliberations, therefore, should aim at curtailing lengthy negotiations and reaching agreement that can be translated into concrete actions.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is in this spirit that we Africans come to Doha to contribute constructively to the outcome of this conference and are fully confident that we can achieve concrete deliverables.

I am informed that the average per capita emission in Europe is 10 metric tonnes per year and in North America it is double that amount. In my country, Ethiopia, it was estimated to be 1.8 metric tonnes per year in 2010. Over and above the low per capita emissions, we are striving to become a carbon neutral middle income country by 2025.

It is because of this that we, Africans, call on all concerned to take concrete and ambitious actions in curtailing global emissions. It is, therefore, with high hopes and expectations that we look forward for the commencement of the Second Commitment Period at the beginning of January 2013. In this Second Commitment Period, it is extremely paramount that developed country parties to the Kyoto Protocol honour their commitments through ambitious mitigation commitment.

We Africans also call on all parties to respect the balance of the outcome reached in Durban last year. We urge Annex I parties, in addition to joining us in ensuring an ambitious and legally binding second commitment period, commit to ambitious and

comprehensive set of outcomes under the Bali Action Plan to ensure the full, effective and sustained implementation of our Convention.

Moreover, we recognize that progress in the Durban Platform negotiations is premised on successful conclusion of the two Ad Hoc Working Groups. In line with this premise, however, our collective effort of developing a legally binding instrument through this Platform should address issues of mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building in a comprehensive manner. We therefore urge this work be expedited in time so that we have the instrument in place for future implementation.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We Africans are also glad to learn that the Board of the Green Climate Fund has submitted its first report to COP-18. Nevertheless, as my predecessor, H.E. Mr. Meles Zenawi said last year during COP-17, though setting up the Fund is a major step, the progress will have little meaning unless action is taken to adequately finance the Fund. There is a practical proposal in the report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing, which must be used as a basis for an agreement of funding adaptation and mitigation projects and programmes.

Before Concluding, Excellencies, in our present context, Africa is adopting the green economic path of development so as to minimize its possible negative impacts on the biosphere. African ministers who met in Addis Ababa last year to prepare for the Rio+20 World Summit on Sustainable Development agreed that Africa's path out of poverty will be green. The Rio+20 Summit in June 2011 endorsed our choice of a green path to sustainable development. But, since Africa is the poorest continent, we need support to finance our journey along a green path of development. Our development partners, therefore, should help.

Let us, therefore, join our hands together to achieve our common desire of reducing the global threat of climate change. It is my earnest hope that with the goodwill and commitment of all of us, we will make progress in this round of the negotiations.

I thank you