

Opening Statement at the Opening of IPCC 34th Session of the IPCC

by

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Honorable Minister for Water and Environment, Mme Maria Mutagamba,

Honorable Minister of State for Environment, Mme Flavia Nabugere,

Honorable Minister of State for Water Mme Betty Bigombe,

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you at this 34th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, on behalf of the World Meteorological Organization.

This Plenary takes place at the end of an important and transformative year for the IPCC, and on the eve of the crucial COP 17 of the UNFCCC, also on this continent. The IPCC has successfully completed two Special Reports: the one on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation (SRREN), accepted by the Panel at its 33rd Session in Abu Dhabi in May of this year, and the one on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX), which is expected to be accepted by the Panel at this Session. These two reports provide important contributions to the debate at the forthcoming UNFCCC COP-17 meeting in Durban and to the preparations for the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report.

I am pleased to see that the preparations of AR5 are moving ahead as scheduled. The AR5 promises to be at least as important and relevant as the previous IPCC assessments. WMO counts on the work of IPCC as a strong basis for countries to continue making decisions and developing strategies for adjustment to a changing climate, especially in areas such as agriculture and water resources. As you may know, supporting this process is also our focus today at the WMO. The Global Framework for Climate Services, under development, will boost the availability of climate information needed by policy-makers and people to plan ahead and to take decisions that are sustainable in a changing climate. It

will be a global undertaking involving a wide array of stakeholders, which are currently being engaged through various consultations.

This year, attention to, and scrutiny of the activities of the IPCC by policy makers and the public have continued to increase. While not diminishing the challenges that this fact poses, I wish to dwell instead on the opportunities: this attention is a strong testimony of the vitality and relevance of the work that the Panel produces.

The decisions that the Panel took in May in Abu Dhabi in relation to its governance, procedures, communications, and to issues such as dealing with conflict of interest are of key importance to the future of the IPCC, just like those that are expected to be taken at this 34th Session in Kampala. These decisions will have a long-lasting impact on the way the Panel delivers its work and meets the ever more stringent requirements and needs of the international community. Indeed, the strengthening of the IPCC procedures and governance structures will have positive effects on the quality of its products, and will enhance the Panel's credibility in the delivery of its mandate.

In Abu Dhabi, the Panel undoubtedly demonstrated its ability to respond concretely and effectively to the implementation of the conclusions of the InterAcademy Council review process that started in 2010. It is now our expectation that the 34th Session held here in Kampala will bring the review process to its closure. I wish to encourage you to reach that goal. I stress the urgency to conclude, swiftly and decisively, the review process, so that the Panel may devote the entirety of its capacities and energies to the important tasks that lay ahead with respect to the Fifth Assessment period.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to inform you that the WMO Congress held its Sixteenth Session in Geneva in May of this year and, as part of its agenda, addressed issues related to the IPCC. On that occasion, the IPCC Chair had the opportunity to present a report on the IPCC work. In its deliberations, the Congress expressed among other things its continued appreciation for the role that the Panel has in preparing and disseminating high-quality scientific assessments in support of policy formulation on climate change, and welcomed the progress being made in preparing the AR5 and the release of Special Reports.

Most importantly, the Congress reaffirmed that the IPCC should continue its fundamental mission. WMO will indeed continue supporting the activities of IPCC substantively, financially and administratively, exploring stronger programmatic ties for interaction and cooperation, and sustaining the IPCC Secretariat, hosted at the WMO premises in Geneva.

In conclusion, as we begin this important 34th Session of the IPCC, let me reiterate WMO's commitment and support to the success of your work.

I look forward to the conclusions of your deliberations, and to join you in your meetings over the next two days.