

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

39th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

7 April 2014, Berlin, Germany

Opening statement

Rajendra K. Pachauri, Chairman of the IPCC

Your Excellency Mr Jochen Flasbarth,
Your Excellency, Mr Georg Schütte,
Mr Deon Terblanche,
Ms Jacqueline McGlade,
Representative of the Secretariat of the UNFCCC,
Co-Chairs of WGIII, Dr Ottmar Edenhofer, Dr Ramon Pichs Madruga, and Dr Youba Sokona,
Deputy Secretary of the IPCC, Mr Gaetano Leone,
Distinguished delegates,
Members of the media,
Authors present on this occasion,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you to this Thirty-Ninth Session of the IPCC. Berlin is a significant location for events related to climate change. I recall being here in 1995 for the first Conference of the Parties under the UNFCCC which was chaired by Madame Angela Merkel, then Minister of Environment in this country's government. It is a great privilege for us to be here while she leads this country as Chancellor of the Republic.

We are at a crucial juncture in the completion of the Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC. In this week we will be considering approval and acceptance of the Working Group III Report after the successful conclusion of the Working Group I Report in September 2013 in Stockholm, Sweden, and late last month of the Working Group II Report in Yokohama, Japan. The importance of this Working Group III Report can hardly be over-emphasized. We are at a critical stage of discussions and negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Not only is the global community actively carrying out a review of its aspirational goal to limit temperature increase to 2 degrees Celsius, but it is relying essentially on the findings of the Fifth Assessment Report to determine directions for the future. An important consideration in determining this direction would be the assessment of pathways by which the world can mitigate emissions of greenhouse gases as they relate to the attainment of specific targets to limit temperature increase in the future.

The Working Group I Report has clearly established the role of human action as the dominant factor in warming that has taken place since the middle of the last century. It has also assessed on the basis of observations and measurements the extent of sea-level rise, acidification of the oceans, warming of the oceans and the nature of extreme events that have occurred in the past on account of climate change. Projections of the future clearly highlight the challenges that we face related to each of the representative concentration pathways that underlie projections of climate change in the future. The Working Group II Report has given us substantial information on the serious impacts of climate change, and how these impinge on the vulnerability of specific systems and locations as well as how they can affect global food security, the extent of poverty and other manifestations of

climate change including those related to sea-level rise, availability of water resources, the health of human society and the conservation of biodiversity. May I reiterate what I said in Yokohama, that the impacts of climate change will leave no part of the world untouched and unaffected. It is, therefore, essential for us through the completion of this Working Group III report to provide knowledge and information on how to mitigate emissions of greenhouse gases. Previous assessment reports of the IPCC including the Fourth Assessment Report and the assessments of Working Groups I and II as part of the Fifth Assessment Report clearly establish that neither adaptation nor mitigation alone can help us meet the challenge of climate change. The findings of this report are a vital part of filling up the gap in giving us a road map for the future.

Against this background, I would urge the distinguished delegates to exercise a high level of enlightenment in discussing and approving of the Working Group III report. The world needs a robust, policy-relevant and informative document, which 235 authors have worked extremely hard to produce. I salute their dedication and talent in giving us the draft that we have before us today.

In conclusion, I would like to commend the co-chairs of Working Group III, the Technical Support Unit, all the Expert Reviewers and governments for the enormous contribution they have made in getting us to where we are today. It is for all of us during this week to reach a major milestone in completing work on this report for the benefit of human society and all forms of life on this planet. May I end by thanking the Government of Germany for their warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements that have been made for the conduct of this Session. We are very grateful to all those who have worked hard to put all the many arrangements together for creating conditions that I am sure will contribute greatly to the success of this Session.

Thank you.

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