



SPEECH BY PROF. JUDI WAKHUNGU, CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES, DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP ON INTER- GOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC'S) 41ST SESSION, TO BE HELD AT UNEP HEADQUATERS, GIGIRI, NAIROBI, ON 24 FEBRUARY 2015.

**UNEP Executive Director –Dr. Achiem Steiner,
The representative of World Metrological Organization,
The representative of UNFCCC,
The IPCC Chair – Dr. RaJendra Pachauri,
The IPCC secretary – Dr. Renate Christ,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me great pleasure to join you this morning for the official opening of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC's) 41st Session. I am informed that among those in attendance in this Session are representatives of the member states and observer organisations. This is a clear testimony of the wide and important mandate of the IPCC Sessions.

On behalf of the Government of Kenya, and on my own behalf, I would like to welcome all the participants to Kenya and more so those who are in Nairobi for the first time. I would like to urge you to take some time off to mix with Kenyans and visit our beautiful heritage and tourism attractions within the city and its environs. I can assure you, Kenyans are very friendly and hospitable people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since 1990, the IPCC has provided regular and unbiased assessment reports with useful information about the changing climate system. To date, five assessment reports have been produced by the IPCC. Each report has more and new information on the findings with regard to the science compared to its earlier Assessment reports.

The current Assessment Report (AR5), therefore, has the most recent and updated information on the climate system. The world is therefore currently more informed with regard to the science than was previously. It is also worthwhile remembering that the IPCC AR5 synthesis Report released in October 2014 formed the basis of the current UNFCCC Negotiations with regard to maintaining global temperature rise at less than 2 Degrees Celsius. Kenya, therefore, looks forward to the 2015 Agreement, which will have a legal force under the Convention and will be applicable to all parties; and will address mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity building as well as transparency of actions and compliance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The headline statements in the AR5 Summary for Policy Makers (physical science basis) confirm beyond reasonable doubt that Climate Change is a reality and no longer a speculation. The "*balance of evidence*" indicates that the global warming that has set in is anthropogenic (i.e. *man-induced*). This *balance of evidence* is hankered on a scientific basis grounded on decades of analysing data from systematic observations by a network of meteorological stations of member countries of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The projected future impacts present catastrophic scenarios for vulnerable developing countries like Kenya, yet these countries have contributed and continue to contribute little to the global greenhouse emissions.

Climate change is projected to undermine food security and ecosystem services, and lead to an increased displacement of people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Analysis of long-term meteorological data in Kenya indicates that a number of signals of these changes are already apparent in Kenya. These signals have not limited to the following;

- Increasing trend in surface air temperature.

- Shifts in rainfall seasons onset and cession dates which have resulted to general decrease in the lengths of the rainfall seasons as well as seasonal rainfall amounts.
- Increasing frequency and intensity of extreme climate events especially drought and floods.
- General decreasing trend in seasonal rainfall amounts.
- Receding of glaciers on Mount Kenya.

All these have impacted and still continue to impact negatively on many of the country's socio-economic activities. Kenya has, therefore, taken a number of measures aimed at responding to climate change and its associated impacts.

These measures include:

- Refined the National Environment Policy to ensure environmental sustainability,
- Development of a National Climate Change Response Strategy in 2010,
- A National Climate Change Action Plan(2013-2017) to operationalise the Response Strategy towards a low carbon-climate resilient development pathway,
- Draft National Climate Change Framework Policy that has been submitted to the Cabinet for approval; and the Climate Change Bill (2014), awaiting its third and final reading in the National Assembly. The two will guide the mainstreaming of climate change in development, sectoral policies, as well as strengthening institutional arrangements.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The information contained in the IPCC Assessment Reports is extremely essential for all policy makers with regard to the making of informed decisions touching on development. Adaptation to and mitigation against the changing climate are strategies for reducing and managing risks of climate change.

This Forty-first Session of the IPCC comes at a time when the 5th Assessment Cycle has come to an end and you are looking forward to the start of the 6th Assessment Cycle. I am sure lessons learnt from previous Assessment Reports will greatly inform the development of this cycle. In this regard, I note that the main agenda item of this Forty-first Session of the IPCC will be the longer term development of the IPCC, including structure and mandate of IPCC Working Groups and any Task Forces created by the IPCC. A report by the Task Group on the future work of the IPCC, which was established at the 37th Session of the IPCC (Batumi, October 2013), presenting its options and recommendations will also be discussed. This is clear testimony of the IPCC's endeavours to make information at its disposal more effectively and efficiently communicated for the benefit of the most vulnerable subjects of society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, let me assure you that Kenya is eagerly waiting for the outcome of this very important Session and will be in favour of all decisions and recommendations which enhance availability of IPCC's information; that is information which is timely, to the targeted subjects and in the most understandable formats. Information satisfying these criteria will be ideal for use by both Kenya's National and County Governments so as to make the country more and more Climate Change resilient.

It is now my pleasure to declare this 41st Session of the IPCC officially open and wish you fruitful deliberations for the next four days. **Thank You**