

**Speech by Ambassador Everton Vargas
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Madam Secretary of State,
Ministers and High Officials,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I thank the Government of the United States for providing this opportunity for an exchange of ideas on the future of the multilateral regime on climate change. This initiative is inspired by the great debate that is taking place worldwide and in this country, rallying government and society, on how to respond to the challenges of climate change.

Politics and diplomatic action cannot contradict more robust scientific certainty. The IPCC assessments issued this year unequivocally point out that the observed changes in the global climate result from human action.

We must act urgently to fight climate change. Its adverse impacts affect us all; but the biggest suffering will be of those in most vulnerable situations in developing societies, in particular the poorest ones. They will suffer the consequences of a phenomenon to which they have contributed very little or almost nothing at all.

The problem demands a collective effort. This does not mean the same effort for all, but that all must take action. Those who benefited from the fruits of development in the last 200 years, without having to care for the consequences to the planet – the industrial nations – must lead this common effort. This historical perspective must determine how to apportion responsibility regarding our common future.

Would it be fair that a developed country, which has already much contributed for increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and where emissions arise from highly

unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, not commit itself to controlling and reducing emissions?

Would it be fair that a country still struggling to overcome poverty, where emissions must rise to provide energy and lift millions out of poverty, would it be fair that a country with such a duty to fight against want and hunger bear additional conditionalities?

This shows how unfair it is to compare present emissions from actions to eliminate poverty and hunger with emissions from carbon-intensive lifestyles. They are different by definition and must be treated in different ways. This differentiation is recognized in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the pillar of international cooperation to attain the ultimate objective of the Convention.

This does not translate, in any sense, in a license to pollute. Our choices must also be guided by the precautionary principle, so that generations to come have a better future than our present.

To do so, we must strengthen, under the Framework Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, a fair arrangement for each country's contribution to the global effort in reducing emissions that recognizes the overriding priority of developing countries: develop to eradicate poverty. Both treaties consolidate the negotiated distribution of mitigation costs among countries. In this effort, all developed countries must exercise effective leadership and reduce their emissions. To justify inaction in these countries with the argument of excessive economic costs goes against the very essence of the Convention and the Protocol.

Ladies and gentlemen,

According to independent studies, developing countries are not only taking measures to reduce emissions but are actually, in some cases, doing more than developed countries. This is the result of public policies and investment decisions that require institutional capacity, access to technology and to financial resources.

Some of these estimates point out that, if Brazil continues ongoing public policies, emissions should fall significantly in the near future. In Brazil, government determination and mobilization of national resources coupled with the use of high technology embarked in the China-Brazil Earth Resources Satellite (CBERS) have led to a reduction of more than 50% in the rate of deforestation in the last three years. The use of biofuels has led to a cut of approximately 650 million tons in CO₂ emissions in the last thirty years, as well as to gains in crop productivity for sugar cane and to technological breakthroughs in flex-fuel engines. Under the Clean Development Mechanism, 60% of emissions reductions are financed by Brazilian resources. These and other actions to prevent climate change are compiled in a document made available to participants.

Even though we still have millions of people in extreme poverty, Brazil has been acting decisively. We are determined to do more. We hope that this determination be shared by other countries by the measure of their historical responsibilities for the rise in the planet's temperature.

Brazil is ready and willing to further contribute to global emission reduction efforts under a framework that recognizes and supports, under the Convention, developing countries' national efforts to lower – or even reverse – the growth rate of their emissions curves.

To put in practice and demonstrate this template for engaging and supporting developing countries, Brazil proposed at COP-12, last year in Nairobi, the adoption of an arrangement under the Convention to provide financial incentives to developing countries that reduce emissions from deforestation.

The market can also help countries to fight climate change while promoting social development and economic growth with lower emissions. A success story is the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism. Market mechanisms are part of an effective response, but are not the only answer. Climate protection is by far too important to be left solely in the hands of the market. A real engagement on the part of governments is needed, with courage to tackle the present carbon-intensive development model. We need public policies to facilitate more effective access to those left out by the market to financial resources and clean technologies.

We need to devise innovative arrangements that stimulate the development and transfer of technology. Some partnerships are presently under way but they are not enough. One possibility is to develop innovative financial mechanisms, with the support of international financial institutions, for purchasing or licensing at low-cost of these technologies to developing countries. Such arrangement could also envisage public-private partnerships under the Framework Convention, bringing together governments, the productive sectors, scientific communities and academia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This meeting should contribute and enrich the negotiations on future of the climate change regime under the auspices of the the United Nations. Specific proposals for action must be debated and approved by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. Full participation of all Parties, such as small island states, LDCs and other Parties, is vital to achieve a legitimate and viable solution for the regime that is efficient in combatting climate change and fair in distributing the costs of mitigation measures.

Fulfillment of our commitments under the Convention and the Protocol, awareness of the grave impacts of global warming and concern for the well-being of future generations have led Brazil to mainstream the fight against climate change into our government policies. We have no choice. And we hope that all take similar action.

Climate change is more than an environmental issue. It goes beyond economic or industrial competitiveness. It is an issue of sustainable development and international equity.

It is an issue of justice.

Thank you.