

Remarks at the Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change

Secretary Condoleezza Rice
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SECRETARY RICE: Thank you very much. Good morning and thank you very much, Paula, for that kind introduction. I want to thank all of you for joining us here for this very important conference. I especially want to thank ministers who have made the effort to come here, many who were in New York with me. I also want to thank the representatives of the delegations for joining us.

We come together today because we agree that climate change is a real problem -- and that human beings are contributing to it. The best science tells us exactly this. Now, it is our responsibility as global leaders to forge a new international consensus on how to address climate change.

This test has much in common with the other great challenges that are defining this young century -- from weapons proliferation, to the spread of disease, to transnational terrorism. These are truly global problems, and no one nation, no matter how much power or political will it possesses, can succeed alone. We all need partners, and we all need to work in concert.

I want to stress that the United States takes climate change very seriously, for we are both a major economy and a major emitter. Climate change is a global problem and we are contributing to it, therefore, we are prepared to expand our leadership to address the challenge. That is why President Bush has convened this meeting.

The purpose of this gathering, and of those to come, is to ensure that all of us are working pragmatically toward a common purpose, to contribute to a new international framework for addressing climate change beyond Kyoto and to help all nations fulfill their responsibilities under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Here in this room, we have major global players on climate change -- those who contribute most to the problem, and those who are essential to reaching a solution. We have representatives of major international institutions and non-governmental organizations. We have members of private industry. And we have governments from countries comprising about two-thirds of the global population, four-fifths of the global economy, and about four-fifths of global emissions. We all represent many different interests and opinions, but ultimately, we need to answer just one fundamental question: What kind of world do we wish to inhabit and what kind of world do we intend to pass on to future generations?

That question resonates profoundly with every American. We have always found sanctuary and meaning in the majesty of our environment. And we have always been passionate about our duty to be good stewards of the natural world. As one of our greatest conservationists, President Teddy Roosevelt, said exactly one century ago: "There must be a realization of the fact that to waste, to destroy, our natural resources will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed."

President Bush shares this conviction, and he has echoed it himself: "Good stewardship of the environment is not just a personal responsibility," he said. "It is a public value. Americans are united in their belief that we must preserve our natural heritage and safeguard the environment."

And let me also just say, on a personal level, that I'm a Californian and it is a state along the shores of the Pacific Ocean and among the hills of Palo Alto where I live, where conservation and protection of the global environment is a cause that is cared about very, very deeply.

At the same time, we recognize that climate change is a complex matter and a difficult issue because it cannot be dealt with effectively as an environmental challenge alone. As our leaders agreed at this year's G-

8 and APEC meetings, climate change requires an integrated response --encompassing environmental stewardship, economic growth, energy supply and security, and the development and deployment of new clean energy technology. How we forge this integrated response has major consequences -- not only for our future, but also for our present.

Right now, more than half of the world's people live on less than \$2 a day. Many of these men, women, and children have no access to energy -- and thus little ability to do the basic things that we with more privilege take for granted, like storing food, reading and studying after sundown, cooling and heating our homes, or turning on a computer and connecting to an ever more technologically sophisticated world. Helping those on the margins of the global economy to lift themselves out of dire poverty is one of the greatest moral issues of our time. So we must be committed to addressing climate change in a way that does not starve economies of the energy they need to grow and that does not widen the already significant income gap between developed and developing nations.

It is our hope that we can make progress toward that goal in this meeting and in those to come, and that in doing so we will support and accelerate the broader processes now underway in the UN Framework Convention. Like many of you, I have just come from the UN General Assembly, where I participated in the high-level event on climate change. The United States supports the goals of that event. And we want this year's UN Climate Change Conference in Indonesia to succeed. That is why we are asking the members of this meeting to focus on three important tasks.

First, we should agree upon a long-term goal for greenhouse gas reduction. Climate change is a generational challenge, and it requires a serious long-term commitment to reverse the growth in global emissions to the point where we can stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. We should do this, as we agreed in the UN Framework Convention, in a timeframe that allows the environment to adapt and in a way that ensures continued global economic development.

Our second task is to establish mid-term national targets and programs to reach our common broader goal. Let me stress that this is not a one-size-fits-all effort. Every country will make its own decisions, reflecting its own needs and its own interests, its own sources of energy and its own domestic politics. Though united by common goals and collective responsibilities, all nations should tackle climate change in the ways that they deem best.

Here in this country, for example, we had a national debate on energy in 2005. It produced bi-partisan agreement on new mandates for renewable fuels and appliance efficiency, along with a multi-billion dollar authorization to research and bring to market clean energy technology. Many of our states are using more renewable power and increasing building efficiency. President Bush is working to reduce our gasoline consumption by up to 20 percent in ten years, and to cut greenhouse gases through aggressive new mandatory standards for alternative fuels and improved vehicle efficiency.

Steps like these are necessary to ensure that our current economic and energy policies are both cost-effective and environmentally effective. But ultimately, we realize that the long-term challenge we face is daunting and requires further advancement on technology and building substantially on recent progress. Managing the status quo is simply not an adequate response.

And it is not hard to see why. Across the world today -- in places like Sao Paulo and Shanghai and Mumbai and Mexico City and Jakarta and Johannesburg, and still in many cities of the developed world -- millions of people are striving for their place in an emerging global middle class, and for all of the expectations that a modern way of life will bring -- from well-paying jobs, to automobiles, to decent homes. But the fact is, no matter how much we improve our current approach to energy, economics, and the environment, our current trajectory cannot accommodate these people's dreams.

If we stay on our present path, we face an unacceptable choice: Either we sacrifice global economic growth to secure the health of our planet or we sacrifice the health of our planet to continue with fossil-fueled growth. This is a choice that we must refuse to make. Instead, we must cut the Gordian Knot of fossil fuels, carbon emissions, and economic activity. This current system is no longer sustainable, and we must transcend it entirely through a revolution in energy technology. So our third task is to work with private industry to develop and bring to market new energy technologies that not only pose no risk to economic growth, but can actually accelerate it.

In our vision of a more hopeful world, millions of people now on the margins of a global economy would not only be joining an ever expanding circle of prosperity; they would be joining citizens of developed nations in sharing new technologies that entirely transform the ways that we human beings relate to our natural world, and to one another. This would be a world of clean cars running on ethanol or hydrogen fuel cells, a world filled with good jobs in green office parks and skyscrapers, a world where power is available to all -- at the flip of a switch or the turn of a key -- from alternative sources of energy like wind, or clean coal, or civilian nuclear power.

In recent years, the United States has been investing in new energy technologies that have the potential to overcome the challenge of climate change and transform our world. This has been the focus of our efforts here at home and the goal of our international diplomacy, where we have made a special effort to forge new partnerships with developing countries.

With Brazil, we are working to tap the enormous potential of biofuels -- both to meet our energy needs and to help developing nations in the Americas to meet theirs. Together, we are developing and sharing new technologies that can enable consumers of fossil fuels to shift to homegrown biofuels.

With India, we have negotiated an agreement to open a path of cooperation on civil nuclear energy and technology. Once finalized, this agreement will help one of the world's fastest growing energy consumers to meet its people's economic aspirations by launching a second Green Revolution.

And in Asia, we helped to bring the two largest developing countries, China and India, together with other regional states to form the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate. Working with major global leaders of private industry, our governments are seeking to share new energy technologies that can fuel economic development and that is both sustainable and environmentally sound.

Ladies and Gentlemen, because climate change touches on so many areas of human endeavor -- from our energy policies, to our economic activity, to our environmental future -- the challenge may seem daunting. And indeed it is. But this challenge can also be a catalyst for present day progress. And that is the idea that I want to leave you with this morning.

As we work together, in this meeting and through the U.N. Framework Convention -- as we take steps to reduce emissions and develop new technologies to move us beyond fossil fuels -- let us approach climate change not simply as a looming future threat, but as a present opportunity to work together, a chance to design a better and more sustainable approach to fuel human development, a chance to lift millions of people out of poverty and into the promise of the global economy and a chance to protect and preserve our natural world -- not only for future generations, but also for those of us who are now living.

I want to thank you very much for your presence here today. As we have important challenges before us, it is good to get together to talk about how to approach the challenges. But it is also good to get together to talk about how we might use the opportunities. And I look forward to working with all of you. Thank you very much.