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Bonn, Germany
Speaking notes opening ceremony
Africa Carbon Forum, Nairobi, Kenya
3 March 2010

It is my honour to speak with you briefly today, on behalf of the Nairobi Framework Partners, on the occasion of the opening of the second All-Africa Carbon Forum.

First allow me to extend apologies from Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, who was unable to attend. Mr. de Boer was instrumental in the formation of the Nairobi Framework and is a great supporter of its work. He wishes this forum much success.

The vast majority of you here today will have already heard of the clean development mechanism. Perhaps the majority of you are fully involved in the CDM, as designated national authorities, project developers, project certifiers, service providers or offset buyers.

I do not need to tell you about the benefits of this remarkable mechanism. You already know how it is stimulating investment in projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, how it is assisting countries in achieving their sustainable development goals, how it is generating funds for adaptation to climate change.

Indeed, with more than 2060 projects in 63 countries, the CDM is a true success story of the Kyoto Protocol. It is a tool, up and running, that we have at our disposal, now, to help mitigate climate change and help countries adapt to the inevitable effects of climate change.

However, what you will also know is that the CDM, despite its success, has not been a success everywhere in equal measure. In fact, Africa accounts for a little less than 2 per cent of the projects registered to date.

Is this problem due to a lack of potential for CDM in Africa? No. Research suggests that there is a great deal of untapped potential for CDM in Africa. The overwhelming response of industry to this event is another even more compelling statement of the interest in, and potential for, CDM in Africa.

It is the goal of the Nairobi Framework to help find and unlock that potential. Responding to a call for more effort to extend to the reach of the CDM, United Nations agencies and multilateral development banks joined forces, knowing that a coordinated, sustained effort was only hope of success. That call to action was made by right here in Gigiri by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in December 2006.

The members of the Nairobi Framework now include: UNEP, UNDP, UNITAR, UNCTAD, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the UNFCCC secretariat, which is honoured to serve as focal point of the Framework.

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It is fitting that we are back here in Gigiri for this forum, which brings together representatives of the public sector and private sector, with the express intention of increasing CDM in Africa. We are not here simply to raise awareness about the clean development – although this is indeed extremely important – but we are here to actually bring interested private and public sectors partners together, and perhaps even sign some deals.

The CDM is, after all, a market-based mechanism, requiring interest and buy-in from the private sector. Forums like this one, which follows on from the first all-Africa Carbon Forum held in Senegal in September 2008, are a great way to stoke that interest and facilitate business. That forum, like this one, was organized with our able partners, the International Emissions Trading Association.

Such efforts are bearing fruit. There are now about 40 registered projects in 11 African countries. There are about another 80 projects in the validation/registration pipeline. Together, this represents more than a 50 per cent increase over 2008.

Importantly, the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, indeed all stakeholder in the CDM and the Executive Board that oversees the mechanism, are committed to increasing CDM in countries that have yet to adequately benefit from the mechanisms.

For example, in Copenhagen in December, Parties adopted a decision that among other things should help extend the reach of the CDM.

- They agreed to measures to accelerate the development of CDM projects in countries with fewer than 10 registered CDM projects.
- They called for the development of methodologies that are particularly suited for application in these under-represented countries.
- They agreed to the provision of loans to cover the costs of the initial stages of development for projects in under-represented countries.

There is so much more that one could say about the CDM. But, everything of importance will be covered in the very full, very impressive program over the next three days. So, I will end here, by again simply wishing everyone a successful and prosperous forum, on behalf of the UNFCCC secretariat and the Nairobi Framework partner agencies.

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