



The General Secretariat
The Technical Secretariat of
the Council of Arab Ministers responsible
For the Environment

The Arab Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change

The Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment in its 19th session at the headquarters of the Secretariat of the League of the Arab States on 5, 6 / 12/2007 has adopted the Arab Ministerial Declaration on climate change, which constitutes the base for future action and reflects the Arab position in dealing with climate change issues, according to the following:

- Taking into account;

the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro 1992, and Section II of Agenda 21 regarding conservation and management of resources for development: Chapters 9-22, and chapters 33-34 on financial resources and mechanisms, and transfer of environmentally sound technology, cooperation and capacity building to help developing countries implement Agenda 21; the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change along with the Kyoto Protocol and the commitments laid down thereof; and Marrakech Accords in the 7th session of the COP to UNFCCC in 2001, establishing 3 Funds: a Special Climate Change Fund, the Adaptation Fund and a Special Fund for the Least Developed Countries.

-Emphasizing on: the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, particularly principle 7 concerning the common but differentiated responsibility between developed and developing countries and the acknowledged responsibility by the developed countries that they bear in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment, and the technologies and financial resources they command; the 16th principle on the responsibility of the polluter to bear the cost of pollution; paragraphs 14-23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Action on changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns, and paragraphs 36-38 on climate change and the emphasis on the commitment to achieve the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC to stabilize greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous interference with the climate system, within a time frame that allows the ecosystems to naturally adapt to the climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, and respective capabilities.

-Recalling the developed countries acknowledgement to bear the historical responsibility arising from the problem of climate change.

- Recalling the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which identified the scientific consensus that climate change is a reality, and that temperature has risen in average by 0.76 degrees Celsius during the 20th century, and that the sea level has increased by 17 cm during the same period; in addition to the fact that the rise in temperature to 2 ° C constitutes the critical stage, and that the Arab region located within the dry and arid regions will be one of most vulnerable regions to the potential impacts of climate change from the

threat to coastal zones to the increased intensity of drought and desertification, the harsh scarcity of water resources, along with the increase in the salinity of groundwater, and the spread of pests epidemics and diseases in an unprecedented manner.

- Being aware of the potential impacts of climate change that might have negative repercussions on the development of the Arab region, such as the recede in agricultural production and vegetation, the loss of biodiversity and the drop in securing food, along with threatening vital economic investments. And being also aware of the social consequences due to the encroachment and migration of citizens from the affected regions to other regions within the same country or neighboring countries or other countries that might result in increasing the pressure on the environment and resources; and the consequences on public health due to the growing air pollution and severe heat waves and the wide range of infectious diseases.

- Recognizing that dealing with the potential impacts of climate change requires international action and solidarity in the context of the goals of sustainable development, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, that benefit all nations, and pay particular attention to assisting the most vulnerable developing countries to climate change; and consider the interests of developing countries - producing fossil fuels, particularly oil, whose economies will be affected by the mitigation measures to climate change; as well as the interests of the developing countries whose economies will be adversely affected by measures and procedures which might be imposed on the exploitation of forests.

- Affirming the importance of international solidarity and action to ensure that the climate

change will not result in more impediments to human development.

- Warning of the consequences of the encouragement of developed countries to developing countries to cultivate agricultural crops that produce bio-fuel instead of food; while encouraging its production from bio-waste.

- Recognizing that in the first half of the 21st century there is no way but adaptation to climate change; and recalling the inequality between the developed and developing countries in the ability to adapt to climate change.

- Commending the hosting of the Solidarity Conference on Climate Change Strategies for African and Mediterranean Regions (Tunis 18-20/11/2007) by the Government of Tunisia under the High Patronage of His Excellency the President of the Government of Tunisia, and requesting the international community to take into considerations its recommendations, particularly reinforcing international solidarity to deal with climate change issues.

- And based on the Millennium Development Goals; and the Initiative on Sustainable Development in the Arab Region 2004;

We, the ministers and heads of delegations participating in the 19th session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo on 5, 6/12/2007 declare our determination to strive to achieve the following:

- The inclusion of policies to deal with climate change issues in all sectors within national and regional policies for sustainable development in a manner that harmonizes with sustained economic growth and efforts to eradicate poverty.

- Adoption of national and regional action plans dealing with climate change issues, in order to assess possible impacts and develop mitigation and adaptation programs, with the governments having the major role in its implementation in coordination and cooperation with all parties concerned, including scientific research centers, universities and institutions of civil society as well as the private sector.

- Mitigation programs shall focus on: the production and use of cleaner fuels, improving the efficiency of energy use in all sectors, diversifying energy sources in accordance with the prevailing economic and social conditions, expanding the use of cleaner production techniques and environmental friendly technologies, as well as expanding the use of economic incentives to encourage more efficient products, along with speedy endeavors to conclude negotiations in the WTO to define lists of environmental goods so as to reduce or lift customs restrictions in accordance, and the utilization of carbon trading and its markets.

- Adaptation to measures that address climate change shall be fully consistent with the economic and social development and in such a way so as to achieve sustainable economic growth and eradication of poverty. It shall be implemented through the development and dissemination of methodologies and tools that assess the impacts of climate change and their extend; as well as through improving planning for adaptation, along with its measures and procedures, in addition to its integration in sustainable development policies; besides understanding, developing and disseminating measures, methodologies and tools that achieve economic diversity with the aim of increasing the elasticity of economic sectors vulnerable to climate change.

- Adaptation programs shall focus particularly on the provision of the necessary infrastructure to

reduce potential risks. This will include appropriate mechanisms for risks insurance, improvement in the management efficiency of natural resources through the use of appropriate techniques and advanced monitoring, control and early warning systems, as well as adequate preparedness to confront disasters caused by climate change, along with capacity building, providing and improving the exchange of information, including weather information, in addition to raising the level of public awareness and promoting partnerships.

- The readiness of Arab Countries to host the Adoption Fund and provide logistic facilities for its success.

We call upon the developed countries:

- To be more committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors, because of the historical present and direct responsibility to climate change; and that the post 2012 period should include quantitative targets with emphasis that adopted measures and policies to achieve these targets do not adversely affect sustainable development in developing countries.

- That actions to the benefits of developing countries should rise to the level of international commitments agreed upon and the challenges posed by climate change, and support currently available mechanisms, especially the clean development mechanism, as well as funding mechanisms and Funds that emerged from the Kyoto Protocol but not yet into force.

- To provide the necessary support for technology transfer, capacity-building and financing to undertake a deeper and more comprehensive assessment of the potential impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable developing

countries, including the Arab countries, to identify priorities and implement mitigation and adaptation programs to climate change, and impacts of mitigation measures.

We call on the XIII Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to:

- Speed up the establishment of the three Funds set forth in the Marrakech Accords, and to reaffirm the right of developing countries, including countries with economies depending on the production and marketing of fossil fuels, to benefit from the financial mechanisms of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, in a balanced manner, and to expedite the operation of the adaptation Fund under a management characterized by independence where developing countries are represented in accordance with the equitable geographical distribution of the United Nations, with fixed or predictable resources, having its own systems and that functions according to rules and criteria based on justice and transparency, and that takes into consideration the priorities and interests of citizens and peoples of the developing countries affected by climate change.

- Focus on countries in Annex 1 for commitments to reduce emissions in the post 2012 period; and to reject any new or voluntary commitments on the developing countries, including the Arab countries. These countries are still in the development phase and need improved efficient fossil energy and developed techniques to build its growth and development on the basis of sustainability. Their first priority is still the eradication of poverty. Moreover developed countries have not achieved their economic and industrial development relying on solar energy or wind power or bio-fuels, but rather on polluted coal energy.

- Develop and transfer clean technology, including technologies for the production of clean fuel, capturing and storing of Carbon dioxide (CCS); and to adopt CCS within the framework of the Clean Development mechanism (CDM) projects.

- Establish studies and research centers for climate change in the regions of developing countries, including the Arab region. These centers should be concerned with examining impacts and challenges facing the citizens and peoples of the developing countries as a result of climatic change.