

Statement of Durwood Zaelke, President,
Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development
Doha: 20 November 2008

Thank you Mr. President. I would like to begin by thanking our host for their generous hospitality, and for organizing this excellent meeting.

Mr. President, last year the Parties to the Montreal Protocol began a new journey when they reached the historic decision to accelerate the phase-out of HCFCs, and to do so in a way that protected not only the ozone layer but also the climate system.

This year, the Parties are continuing on their new climate journey as they begin to address ODS banks, which otherwise will emit 6 billion tones of CO₂-eq. by 2015, and as they begin to address the challenges of controlling high GWP HFCs.

This new climate journey is consistent with the history of the Montreal Protocol, which is to “start, and strengthen.” The Montreal Protocol starts addressing a problem, learns by doing, gains experience and confidence, and then does more.

The Montreal Protocol is considered a fair and balanced treaty by all of its Parties, which includes virtually all of the world’s countries. Indeed, the Montreal Protocol is considered by many experts to be the world’s best environmental treaty, having phased out 97 chemicals by 97%.

The Montreal Protocol is a dynamic treaty that continues to evolve, to improve, and to grow stronger.

The world is beginning to recognize the success of the Montreal Protocol, and to recognize the important role it is playing in climate protection. Last year the G8 Declaration stated the commitment of those heads of government to further strengthen the Montreal Protocol for both ozone and climate purposes.

This year the Declaration of the Major Economies Meeting committed to further strengthening of the Montreal Protocol for ozone and climate purposes. This declaration, by the heads of government of the 17 largest economies, also committed to urgent action under the Montreal Protocol for climate protection. They recognized that the Montreal Protocol can deliver fast results, and they recognized how important this is for climate protection.

Finally Mr. President, I would like to congratulate the Montreal Protocol Parties and its institutions for their strength, for their wisdom, and for their tireless hard work to make this treaty the success that it is.

The Montreal Protocol is a model for cooperation among all countries of the world for solving an urgent global atmospheric problem. It is an inspiration for the world. It shows all of the world that we can succeed.

We can continue our journey of climate protection. We can continue to succeed. To borrow a phrase from the President-elect of the United States, Barack Obama, “Yes we can!”