



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Natural Resources

Remarks by Vincent Biruta, Minister of Natural Resources

28th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol

Preparatory Segment

10 October 2016 | Kigali, Rwanda

- Madam President
- Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat
- Distinguished delegates
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning to you all.

On behalf of the Government of Rwanda, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to Kigali for the 28th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol. Murakaza neza, Welcome, Bienvenue.

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to all Parties for choosing Rwanda to host this important meeting. Thank you for the trust you have placed in us.

I also extend my gratitude to the Ozone Secretariat at the United Nations Environment Programme for your tireless efforts to organise a successful meeting.

Madam President,

It is well known that the Montreal Protocol has achieved great success. As a result of international collaboration and national commitment, we have seen an almost complete end in the use of the substances causing the most harm to our ozone layer.

Our collective efforts over many decades will impact not only the next generation, but also the future of humanity. We should be very proud of what we have achieved.

Today, almost thirty years since the Montreal Protocol was agreed upon, we come together in the same spirit of global partnership and determination.

We are meeting here in Kigali with unity of purpose – to pass an ambitious amendment to the Protocol that would phase out the use of hydrofluorocarbons.

Doing so could avoid up to half a degree of warming by the end of the century. The case for the amendment is quite clear.

We are meeting with such a well-defined objective due to the tireless work of so many of you here today. The ground-breaking work on the Dubai Pathway, as well as formal and informal gatherings across the globe, mean that we now have a real chance to make history, once again.

Distinguished delegates,

For many of the world's most vulnerable nations, including Rwanda, climate change is no longer an issue on the horizon. It's a reality of our daily lives. From droughts that destroy our crops to landslides that tragically claim the lives of our sisters and brothers, we know too well the impacts of a warming planet.

That is why Rwanda and so many nations from all corners of the globe support an ambitious amendment to the Protocol. And if the amendment is accompanied by strong efforts to promote energy efficiency, we could double the climate benefits and avoid a full degree Celsius of warming.

While there are still some details to conclude on, I am confident that you, as global experts on ozone protection and the climate, will provide guidance on the solutions and reach consensus on these pending issues.

We count on your thoughtful analysis and wisdom to produce an amendment that is ambitious and agreeable to all Parties.

I am encouraged by the outcomes of discussions over the last few days, especially the decision to compile solutions generated in Vienna into a legal text. This will give our negotiations a greater sense of direction.

Distinguished delegates,

Within the next month, the Paris Agreement will come into force. This remarkable achievement shows us that we have the political will and global momentum to address climate change. The tide on climate action has turned, and not a moment too soon.

By being courageous, by putting the future ahead of the present and amending the Montreal Protocol, we will send the signal that world's governments are serious about action on climate change. Citizens of our countries will know that they can count on us to protect their future.

As we strive to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 13 on Climate Action, we must recognise that improving lives and conserving nature cannot be separated. In doing so, we will live up to the promise of the goals: to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

And if we are successful here in Kigali, we will not only achieve an incredible environmental milestone, but also create the momentum for even greater success at the 22nd Conference of the Parties in Morocco next month.

Madam President,

I speak now not as a representative of the Government of Rwanda, but as a citizen of our home, planet earth.

We have a unique opportunity to harness the goodwill and commitment to protect our climate and secure the bright future our citizens deserve.

Amending the Montreal Protocol rests on an unshakable moral obligation to the health of our planet and serves as a critical building block to solidify the recent gains to address climate change.

I encourage all Parties to come to the negotiating table with the same spirit of collaboration and commitment that the Montreal Protocol is known for.

Madam President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Rwanda stands ready to work with all Parties to find common ground and to reach an amendment that we can all be proud of.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and a pleasant stay in Rwanda.

Thank you for your kind attention.