

**SPEECH BY HC TO THE GLOBAL CLIMATE NETWORK EVENT
27 JANUARY 2010 JOHANNESBURG**

It gives me great pleasure to be at this event, and to be associated with the Global Climate Network. I would like to thank Andrew Gilder, and Catherine Warburton, Directors of IMBEWU Sustainability Legal Specialists for inviting me tonight.

I want to say something about the Network in a few minutes, but first let me focus on the timing of this event. Just over 4 weeks ago the 15th Conference of the Parties closed in Copenhagen, with 50,000 people returning home unsure what to make of what had happened over the preceding fortnight. A short, non-legally binding Accord, drafted by a core group of countries, including South Africa, which was “noted” by the rest of the Conference seemed like a poor return for the huge effort that went into negotiations throughout 2008 and 2009. There have been many post-mortems in the political and public arenas, blaming everything from the way the negotiations were managed, through the lack of developed country ambition, to the US, China. I know there are many, many in this room, who were very disappointed by the outcome in Copenhagen. Others saw something positive in what was achieved. The British Government takes the latter view.

Fact - Copenhagen did not achieve what we wanted. The UK and South Africa share a common goal of achieving a legally binding agreement of sufficient ambition from developed and developing countries alike to avoid calamitous climate change. Copenhagen did not give us this.

But fact: Copenhagen did produce an Accord signalling a permanent move to a low carbon economy. And it was agreed by a group representing 49 developed and developing countries that together account for over 80% of global emissions. The Accord:

- Endorses two degrees warming limit as the benchmark for global progress on climate change;
- Agrees that all developed AND leading developing countries should make specific commitments to tackle emissions, to be lodged by January 31st;
- Assures delivery by all countries signing up to comprehensive measurement, reporting and verification of progress;
- Confirms significant commitments made by the rich world to developing countries, which includes fast start finance worth 10bn dollars a year by 2012 – with a total of up to \$2.4 billion dollars from the UK – and specific support to tackle deforestation.

In the longer term, the Accord supported the goal - first set by the British Prime Minister - of 100bn dollars a year of public and private finance for developing countries by 2020. It is essential now to get global momentum behind the Accord, so it can serve as the foundation to build on towards a legally binding text.

We should therefore focus on the positives – why? Because they are certainly there, and because the argument for addressing climate change has not changed. Recent media reports question the veracity of some of the scientific evidence used by the IPCC don't change this. The media are right to challenge; that ensures we are working from the best, peer reviewed information. But the overwhelming weight of scientific evidence tells us that we need to address man's impact on the climate. We all know what the consequences of inaction are. Almost daily the news services carry stories of more frequent and stronger climatic disasters, whether it is the worst drought in decades in Kenya causing untold misery to millions of Africans, to torrential rains and mudslides causing death and homelessness on a vast scale in countries as far apart as Brazil, Mexico, Taiwan and China. For vulnerable countries globally, but specifically in Africa, the threats from climate change are very real.

We are at a cross roads where action we collectively take today can protect the future for our children and grandchildren. We simply cannot allow the process to fail.

So do we all wait for a deal before we take action? No - Domestic transformation is key to global action and it is important, particularly for emerging economies like South Africa, to recognise that this transition *is* taking place. And quickly. We in the UK are already legally committed by domestic legislation to reduce emissions by 34% by 2020 against the 1990 baseline and 80% by 2050.

And in addition to the climate benefits, there are real economic ones. We are reducing reliance on finite fossil fuels, building sustainability into our economy and protecting it from the price shocks which rocked the global economies last year. The UK currently holds a 3.5% share of the global market for low carbon and environmental goods and services, which is today worth around £107 billion, employing over 880,000 people in the UK. And by 2015 it's estimated that the environmental goods sector in the UK alone could be worth as much as £150 billion. Globally, this market is set to grow from £3 trillion to £4.3 trillion by 2015.

South Africa has some important decisions to make. Does it protect the traditional structure of its economy, and watch the transition from the sideline; or does it take part in this transition? No prizes for guessing that I hope South Africa chooses the latter course. Quite apart from the global responsibility as the world's 12th largest emitter of CO₂, it makes sense economically to be in the forefront of the low carbon transformation. The industrial revolution widened the economic advantage of the developed countries. The threat from climate change means that the next revolution, the green one, is now taking place. It provides an opportunity for developed and developing countries to move together.

South Africa has submitted an ambitious offer of 34% reduction against Business as Usual by 2020 and 43% by 2025. So the intentions here are clear. The challenge now is to deliver on this. Government and private sector need to work closely to develop the right policy environment to enable, support and encourage business to maintain and build economic competitiveness, protect and expand its export base, and create new sustainable jobs.

No-one underestimates the challenge all countries face, and in particular developing countries. It needs a whole new policy approach. In the UK we have set out the world's most ambitious plans for clean coal and are working to ensure that access to the electricity grid is not a barrier to low carbon generation. In homes and industry, Government programmes have supported the putting insulation in around 2 million British homes in the last 18 months. We will shortly be publishing a 'Household Energy Management Strategy' that will set out new plans to help reduce emissions from households by 29% from 2008 levels by 2020.

Globally there is a phenomenal amount of research and work taking place to inform and advise on steps to achieve this transformation. And there are good examples to draw from. For example, despite its growing emissions, China has been able to generate 17% of its electricity from wind and solar and is on track to meet its renewable target of 15% by 2020.

Which brings me back to this evening's event. The Global Climate Network is an alliance of nine independent, progressive and influential think tanks located in countries where taking action on climate change really matters. The network allows them to draw on and share best practice while bringing together some of the world's brightest brains to figure out and propose progressive solutions to climate change. People in this room are making vital contributions to policy and planning. This sort of collaboration is critical to ensure a coordinated effort in helping to create the political space governments need to act, above all by linking climate change policy with human and economic progress. Your work is vital – your commitment unquestioned – your drive invaluable.

My team and I are proud to be working with you as together we strive for a better, sustainable future.