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My ref:
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7 July 1990

In P. K. ... *statement of fact*

As you will have seen from the Press, the Second Meeting of the Parties Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was a great success. The agreement reached is a major step forward in the international effort to deal with the problem of ozone depletion.

I am convinced that this would not have happened but for your intervention with President Bush. It was crucial in gaining the US commitment to additional funds, without which an agreement on developing countries participation in the Protocol could not have been reached. The fact that you opened the Meeting was very important. It showed both your concern, and the Government's, for the subject and helped galvanise the delegates into action. Many of them signalled their appreciation for your presence in their statements. Your announcement of our financial contribution was also helpful and timely.

The Parties met the ambitious environmental goal you set them. They agreed a substantial tightening of the Protocol controls. Chlorofluorocarbons are to be phased out by 2000 with two intermediate cuts on 1986 levels of 50% in 1995 and 85% in 1997. The Parties also agreed to return to this issue in 1992 with the aim of accelerating the phase out schedule. Halons are to be phased out by 2000 except for agreed essential uses, with a 50% cut by 1995.

Controls on two other ozone depleting chemicals - carbon tetrachloride and methyl chloroform - were also agreed. Use of carbon tetrachloride will be phased out by 2000, with an intermediate cut on 1989 levels of 85% by 1995. Use of methyl chloroform will be reduced by 30% of current levels by 1995 and 70% by 2000. It will be phased out by 2005. Neither of these chemicals were controlled under the Protocol previously.

We had to go slightly further on controls on methyl chloroform than originally intended, but this was unavoidable given the strong pressures from other countries and the need to reach an agreement that all parties would accept. I believe that this has put us in a very good position environmentally. I am confident UK industry will be able to meet the challenge.

One slightly disappointing aspect of the Conference was the fact that several countries including ourselves would have liked to have gone further and faster on CFC's. In particular a number of countries argued that we should phase out CFCs by 1997. This would be a wholly acceptable target provided essential medical uses are exempt. We will be pressing the European Commission to bring forward an amending Regulation to provide for this within the Community as soon as possible.

In view as a particularly significant achievement the agreements on a financial mechanism and technology transfer. Under the financial mechanism developed countries will meet the agreed incremental costs that developing countries incur in complying with the Protocol; the World Bank is assured a major role.

Nearly 60 countries from the developed and developing world succeeded in reaching an agreement that includes controls on chemicals previously vital to economic development, financial support for developing countries, and a commitment to helping those countries obtain and change to the new technologies for producing and using substitute chemicals. Both the Indian and the Chinese delegations said they would recommend to their Governments that they join the Protocol. A number of other delegations, Argentina and Turkey for example, announced they would be joining.

The meeting marks a new phase in international cooperation on major environmental issues. We can build on this to try to solve the other - more difficult - environmental problems that we face, such as biodiversity and global warming.

I am copying this to all Cabinet colleagues, and to Sir Robin Butler.



CHRIS PATTEN

ENV AFF and Rev Pt 17

