

**Speech by Mr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, IPCC Chairman,
at the Opening Ceremony of the 31th Session of the
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
Bali, Indonesia, 26th October 2009**

Your Excellency, Mr. Rachmat Witoelar, distinguished persons at this head table, my colleagues from the IPCC Bureau, distinguished delegates from various countries, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great privilege for me to be here on this occasion. Indeed, Bali not only provides a very pleasant set of surroundings, but it also has a historical role in essentially defining what is going to happen in Copenhagen, because do recall it was in Bali that we came up with the road map that hopefully will take us to our destination. I believe this is a historical moment in the field of climate change and for everything related to the generation of knowledge for this critical area of human endeavor. I think we know that our task has not ended. The role of science in motivating and defining action and facilitating what needs to be done is certainly not over; it is just beginning. Because we must remember that if we get an agreement in Copenhagen, which I am sure will be the case, it is going to set in motion a great deal of action all over the world. It will then be that I think the value of science would, if anything, be enhanced with the need to come up with assessment of climate change in all its dimensions that would be critical in defining what would be done at the international level and certainly at the national and sub-national levels. And therefore, my submission is that the role of the IPCC, if anything, will have to be much greater; we will have to work much harder; we will have to be far more discriminating in what we assess; and given the enormous explosion in research and literature in the field of climate change, we know that the volume and magnitude of our effort will multiply several fold.

I would like to emphasize that in this area of endeavor, societal issues are going to be critical. We already know that there is a huge extent of awareness all over the world, and I have said before that for the IPCC the biggest challenge is its own success. In all modesty, we have to be aware of the fact that this body, which was established 21 years ago, has come to occupy a crucially important role and a very unique position in providing support for policymaking and action in an area that clearly is going to become increasingly important. And given the fact that there is such a huge spread and explosion of awareness all around, we would have to ensure that we meet the needs of human society, and that clearly calls for much greater attention to how our scientific assessment relates to and gets converted into social analysis of what human society is going to be confronted with.

I would like to submit, therefore, that climate change will be seen increasingly against the backdrop of socio-economic implications. We have put in an enormous amount of effort to see how to come up with an outline for the three Working Group reports. We have already done a substantial amount of thinking on the Synthesis Report; of course we have a long way to go because essentially the Synthesis Report has to flow out of work that is done in the Working Groups, but we have followed the guidance, the mandate, and the directions of the Panel in seeing that we provide early and adequate attention to the Synthesis Report to the extent that this is feasible and to the extent that it is of relevance to what this particular report should contain.

And I would like to submit that one area that we have to keep closely in focus would be the whole issue of integration of the vital information that comes out of the assessment of the three Working Group reports. And this is something that we will have to keep clearly at the back of our

minds as we think in terms of using the information in the Working Group reports for structuring the Synthesis Report. And may I say that we will have to make sure that not only is science as we know it reflected fully in what we do, but we will also have to ensure that the science across the three Working Groups fits together in a consistent and coherent manner.

I would like to inform this distinguished audience that we have had the benefit of advice not only from the scientific community but also from all the governments of the world. If we go back in time over the last two years or so, ever since the Synthesis Report of the Fourth Assessment Report came out in November of 2007, we have had intensive preparation for the AR5, the Fifth Assessment Report. Post Valencia, there has been a great deal of deliberation; there has been a great deal of interaction with the very rich talent that has gathered in this room. We had a detailed discussion on the future of the IPCC and therefore of the AR5 in Budapest. We received a large number of written comments and very valuable inputs from governments. These were compiled, these were deliberated on in great depth, and of course in Geneva when we met in 2008 we were able to deal with some of them even though during that session the bulk of our time was really taken up by the election of the new Bureau. But then we had an extremely intensive session in Antalya, Turkey - in the last session of this Panel. I am also very happy to inform this audience that our scoping meeting which was held in Venice in July was remarkably productive and extremely well-conducted by the Vice Chairs of the IPCC, all my colleagues in the three Working Groups, and the TSUs, and I think our collective effort has really led to an extremely effective and very efficiently conducted set of deliberations with outstanding intellectual inputs, which will be placed before you during this meeting. And last, but certainly not the least, we have had an extremely useful Bureau meeting last month where the outlines that came out of Venice received very detailed and thorough analysis, scrutiny and discussion, and on the basis of the valuable feedback we received from the Bureau the outlines have been revised, and they reflect all the wisdom and knowledge that was brought in there.

So may I say, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, that we are at a crucial moment in the destiny of the human race, and given the fact that as humble as we should be, we should not lose sight of the fact that the IPCC through its scientific efforts has been able to make an enormous contribution to human society, the signs of which are apparent. And that should not only give us encouragement, but it should also give us a full reflection of the daunting task ahead of us, because we have really started a very long journey and we have probably taken just the first steps. We have a long way to go, and I am sure this session, the 31st session of the IPCC, will be the very first few inches of the various steps that we have to take in the future.

And I want to, in conclusion, express my gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Witoelar who is now the doyen of the climate change community worldwide and now has much wider shoulders in the sense that he is carrying the entire burden of climate change plans and actions for Indonesia. And Indonesia is a country that has always practiced sustainable development, and that has been rich in its traditions and culture and the application of wisdom and knowledge in all that it has done historically. This country will certainly help us in moving in the right direction.

So, your Excellency, thank you for all your warmth, your hospitality, and the facilitation that we have received in organizing this meeting, and I hope my colleagues will get the most of out of it.

Thank you very much indeed.
