

CHANCELLOR ROBERT C. DYNES
PROJECT ATMOSPHERIC BROWN CLOUD MEETING
NOVEMBER 5, 2002

Good afternoon. It is a privilege to greet the delegates at this landmark conference, and I hope you are enjoying your stay with us at UC San Diego.

Over the weekend, as I was thinking about this meeting and about what I should say to you, I came across a story in the Sunday New York Times about the climate talks in New Delhi that ended last Friday.

The story delivered some good news and some not-so-good news.

The good news is that world leaders are now acknowledging the destruction we humans have wreaked on the earth's climate. The not-so-good news is that world leaders are not yet ready to take the steps needed to mitigate that destruction.

However, amid this mixed news, two promising trends seem to be emerging: The first is that climate policy is catching up with climate science. The second is that climate science is gaining in its battle to safeguard the atmosphere and the oceans.

As I read through the story and thought about this conference, I realized that, if we think about climate science in personal terms, everyone on the planet has something in common.

We all grew up under a blue sky. And we all want our great-grandchildren and their great-grandchildren to grow up under a blue sky. That won't happen unless we take dramatic action on a global scale.

Project Atmospheric Brown Cloud has, in a very short time, provided the impetus for such action. All the world's citizens are indebted to you for that impetus.

I'd like to end my remarks by paying tribute to the leaders of the ABC project.

First, my thanks to Dr. Ramanathan and Dr. Crutzen for their distinguished work on this project and for bringing the ABC steering committee to our campus.

I applaud their decision to hold this seminar here at our Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies and our Institute of Global Conflict and Cooperation.

That decision has given our students a wonderful opportunity to learn about environmental issues by listening to the custodians of the environment.

I'd like to give special thanks to Dr. James Mahoney, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and the Atmosphere and Assistant Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

And I'd like to recognize the visionary leadership of this afternoon's speaker, Dr. Klaus Toepfer.

As Executive Director of the UN Environmental Program, Dr. Toepfer has emerged as one of the environment's most influential and most eloquent advocates. In his statement on World Environment Day 2000, Dr. Toepfer summed up why research efforts like Project Asian Brown Cloud have been a wake-up call about global pollution.

He said, "We are recognizing that what connects the street child in Rio, the farmer in Kenya, the factory worker in Germany and the stockbroker in New York is the global environment."

He ended by observing – and I can confirm this as a university educator – :

"I am particularly heartened by the fact that young people are becoming more aware and vocal about environmental issues to ensure that the price they pay for our environmental misdeeds will not be too great."

This afternoon, as you discuss what comes next in the post-Kyoto, post-Johannesburg world, please keep two things in mind:

That world is listening to you intently. And your work represents our best hope of blue skies for many future generations.

I wish you continued success in this important project. Enjoy the rest of your stay here, and please plan on visiting us again.

Thank you.

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