



PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE

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Oslo, 1 March 1989

Dear Prime Minister,

I congratulate you on the initiative you have taken in hosting the international Ministerial Conference on the Ozone Layer in London. You could hardly have chosen a more timely, appropriate or forward-looking topic. I am sure that the Conference will provide valuable political impetus to efforts to combat the growing threat to the atmosphere posed by emission of ozone-depleting substances.

The 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer represented a significant step forward. It demonstrated clearly to the world community that a significant number of governments were determined to take substantial, concrete measures to save the ozone layer, which is of vital importance to the survival of life on Earth. However, a mere 14 days after the Montreal Protocol was signed, there was disturbing news from Antarctica indicating that the hole in the ozone layer was larger than previously estimated. Unchallenged reports conclude that this hole has been caused by emission of chlorofluorocarbons over the past few decades.

Last spring, scientific studies revealed that there was greater depletion of the ozone layer over the Northern Hemisphere than could be explained by natural variation. Just three weeks ago, the first findings from another NASA expedition, conducted in Norway this past winter, showed that the Northern Hemisphere is also faced with a severely threatened atmosphere. Thus, the situation is much more alarming than was the case when the Montreal Protocol was signed.

Fortunately, the Montreal Protocol was drawn up so as to allow for amendment when necessitated by new scientific

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher  
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of  
Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
London

findings. I am confident that the new data will be reviewed carefully at the London Conference with a view to strengthening our obligations under the Montreal Protocol. It is clear that we must intensify our efforts, and that we possess the economic and technical means to do so.

In order to speed up and intensify measures restricting the use of CFC's, the developed world has a responsibility for providing developing countries with the tools and means required to take the necessary action. I hope that the London Conference will contribute to this process as well.

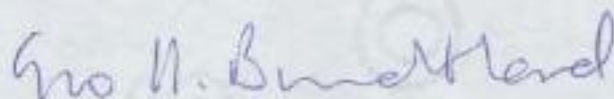
If we are to succeed in saving the atmosphere, a greater commitment is called for, particularly on the part of the major industrialized countries. The fact that the United Kingdom is now addressing these problems more actively inspires hope that the day will soon come when substances which are particularly threatening to the ozone layer will no longer be used.

Sustainable development, the concept on which the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development was based, and which was endorsed by the Toronto Summit last June, comprises a vision of vigorous economic growth which takes into account the limitations set by nature.

We must eliminate the threat to the ozone layer. But we need not relinquish the technological flexibility previously provided by CFCs. The solution to this problem is a real test to our ingenuity. If the ozone-layer and the atmosphere is damaged, there will be no victors or vanquished, only victims.

I am confident that the Conference will not only provide the necessary impetus for intensifying efforts to reduce the threat to the ozone layer, but that it will also contribute significantly to efforts to protect the global climate. My only regret is that I will be unable to join all of you in London. I wish you every success with this important conference.

Yours sincerely,



Gro Harlem Brundtland