

Remarks by Lorenzo Zambrano  
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Good morning.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to welcome you to Cancun, although I know some of you have already been here for several days.

It is an enormous honor—and, equally, an enormous responsibility—for my country to be hosting this meeting of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 16. Quite literally, the eyes of the world are on Cancun, and the futures of billions of people will be affected by what is happening or not happening here.

It is also an honor for me to join Bjorn Stigson and Jean-Guy Carrier in welcoming all of you to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's Global Business Day, and I thank Christiana Figueres for joining us this morning.

I am proud of the work the WBCSD has done over the years. Whenever a politician tells me what **can't** be accomplished in these great global negotiations, I think of all the positive, practical solutions that companies like those represented here are implementing every day.

I am optimistic that a similar spirit of pragmatic progress could produce real results here in Cancun and next year in Durban.

We, as business leaders, need to send several key messages to the climate negotiators: They need to hear from us

- That sustainability is a fundamental—and urgent—requirement of planetary survival.

- That our competitiveness in a globalized economy requires a robust, ambitious and equitable global climate change framework.
- That only such a framework will give us the visibility needed to finance the scale of low-carbon technologies that are required to put the global economy onto a sustainable path.
- And, that we are all in this together: government, industry and civil society. I believe the key to success is collaboration.

In this spirit, I want to recognize the efforts of President Calderon and the Mexican government to engage the private sector actively in the climate change negotiations. This is a model that I hope will be built upon in other countries and in future negotiations.

We all want progress here in Cancun and next year in Durban—but we can't wait for that progress. Instead, as businesspeople, we must redouble our company and industry efforts to reduce emissions, use resources more wisely and develop clean, renewable energy alternatives within the constraints of what is technologically and financially possible.

That means:

- Creating new low-carbon technologies and processes;
- Addressing the carbon emissions issues of accelerating urban development;
- Investing in new energy efficiencies throughout the value chain;
- And, developing new models of public/private cooperation and new sources of financing.

It also means bringing a new transparency to the discussion of climate change by understanding—and publicizing—the carbon footprints of the product we produce and the processes we manage.

None of these efforts run counter to the work of the negotiators. Indeed, I believe that the more **we** do, the better the chance that our governments will quickly follow.

All of these issues and more are on our “Building Bridges” agenda here today. We need to have an honest discussion of the obstacles we face as well as the practical solutions that will allow us to accelerate the pace at which we can move into a lower carbon world. And, we need to be specific as possible about what we need from our governments to make sustainable development a reality.

Let me emphasize that my company, CEMEX, operates in an energy and emissions-intensive industry. Moreover, since concrete is intrinsically related to building the homes and infrastructure needed by a growing urban population, we expect annual concrete consumption to more than double by 2050 worldwide.

That imposes a moral urgency on us—as well as a commercial imperative—to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> footprint to the lowest levels that are technically and financially feasible. In addition, we need to accelerate the development of sustainable building products, and promote increased energy-efficient building and infrastructure construction. And we need to do all that as fast as practically possible.

These are enormous challenges, especially in the wake of the recent financial and economic crisis that hit the construction sector particularly hard. But we are making good progress.

For example, through the WBCSD Cement Sustainability Initiative we have developed a CO<sub>2</sub> protocol and a fully operational database. The industry’s Measuring Reporting and Verification system now covers over 900 kilns worldwide, providing the data we need to make specific progress on key sustainability initiatives.

Of course, we need to do more—and we are deeply committed to doing so.

I want to end by telling you that I am optimistic about the future. Consumers around the globe are demanding more sustainable products and services, and companies are responding. As a result, businesses everywhere are pushing the envelope to discover new, practical solutions to the need for a new sustainable reality. We are moving in the right direction.

Finally, I also see progress on the diplomatic side. The recent success in negotiating the Nagoya biodiversity protocol demonstrated that government negotiators have the capacity as well as the will to craft a complex global agreement. That should be a great inspiration for the work that is going on here in Cancun.

Thank you, and again, thank you for your commitment to sustainability.