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## Ronald Reagan Statement on Signing the Montreal Protocol on Ozone-Depleting Substances *April 5, 1988*

I am pleased to sign the instrument of ratification for the Montreal protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer. The protocol marks an important milestone for the future quality of the global environment and for the health and well-being of all peoples of the world. Unanimous approval of the protocol by the Senate on March 14th demonstrated to the world community this country's willingness to act promptly and decisively in carrying out its commitments to protect the stratospheric ozone layer from the damaging effects of chlorofluorocarbons and halons, but our action alone is not enough. The protocol enters into force next January only if at least 11 nations representing two-thirds of worldwide consumption of chlorofluorocarbons and halons ratify the agreement. Our immediate challenge, having come this far, is to promote prompt ratification by every signatory nation.

I believe the Montreal protocol, negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme, is an extremely important environmental agreement. It provides for internationally coordinated control of ozone-depleting substances in order to protect a vital global resource. It requires countries that are parties to reduce production and consumption of major ozone-depleting chemicals by 50 percent by 1999. It creates incentives for new technologies-chemical producers are already working to develop and market safer substitutes-and establishes an ongoing process for review of new scientific data and of technical and economic developments. A mechanism for adjustment of the protocol is established to allow for changes based upon the review process. The wisdom of this unique provision is already being realized.

Data made available only during the last few weeks demonstrate that our knowledge of ozone depletion is rapidly expanding. For our part, the United States will give the highest priority to analyzing and assessing the latest research findings to assure that the review process moves expeditiously.

The Montreal protocol is a model of cooperation. It is a product of the recognition and international consensus that ozone depletion is a global problem, both in terms of its causes and its effects. The protocol is the result of an extraordinary process of scientific study, negotiations among representatives of the business and environmental communities, and international diplomacy. It is a monumental achievement.

*Source:* Ronald Reagan: "Statement on Signing the Montreal Protocol on Ozone-Depleting Substances." April 5, 1988. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=35639>.