



FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE - Secretariat

CONVENTION - CADRE SUR LES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES - Secrétariat

For use of the media only;  
not an official document.

## PRESS RELEASE

### Buenos Aires conference advances efforts to adapt to climate change and meet Kyoto targets

Buenos Aires, 18 December 2004 – The tenth-anniversary UN Conference on Climate Change concluded today after adopting a package of measures aimed at helping countries to prepare for climate change.

“The Buenos Aires conference marks ten years of action under the Climate Change Convention to address a problem that will be with us for decades if not centuries to come,” said Joke Waller Hunter, Executive Secretary of the Convention.

“This was a conference of hope, sparked by the momentum generated by the upcoming entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol on 16 February 2005. The meeting succeeded in bringing adaptation into the mainstream of the intergovernmental process,” she said.

In the face of growing evidence that climate change impacts can already be detected, the conference adopted the Buenos Aires Programme of Work on Adaptation and Response Measures.

The Programme includes further scientific assessments of vulnerabilities and options for adaptation, support to the National Action Plans on Adaptation of least developed countries, new workshops and technical papers on various aspects of climate change risk and adaptation and support for mainstreaming adaptation into sustainable development planning.

The conference also asked the Convention secretariat to convene a seminar of governmental experts next May in Bonn. The seminar will “promote an informal exchange on a) actions relating to mitigation and adaptation to assist Parties to continue to develop effective and appropriate responses to climate change; and b) policies and measures adopted by their respective governments that support implementation of their existing commitments under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol”.

In addition, the seminar is to be conducted “without prejudices to any future negotiations, commitments, process, framework or mandate under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol”.

Other decisions welcomed the concrete progress made by the Protocol's clean development mechanism (CDM). The conference opened the way for new types of CDM projects related to small-scale forestry, thus adding to existing possibilities such as projects that reduce



methane from landfills or that promote renewable energy. In a move strongly supported by business observers, it also gave strong backing to a strengthening of the CDM's Executive Board.

Other key decisions relate to the rapidly evolving carbon market where allowances and credits from projects that reduce emissions can be bought and sold. In a few days, on 1 January 2005, emissions trading will become a reality for 12,000 companies in the European Union. The sophisticated system ensuring reliable accounting was presented to Ministers present in Buenos Aires.

Meanwhile, several new countries, namely Indonesia, Liechtenstein and Nigeria, joined the Protocol during or just before the conference, bringing the total Kyoto membership up to 132 Parties. Several others announced that their ratification was underway.

Other highlights of the conference included the much-anticipated submissions by Brazil and China of their first national communications outlining their strategies for addressing climate change.

In addition to adopting formal decisions, the conference has evolved into a global forum for businesses, environmental groups and others to exchange ideas, make contacts and present new reports and findings. Some 60 exhibits and over 150 seminars and events were held on the sidelines of the intergovernmental talks.

During the final high-level segment, some 85 ministers along with heads of delegation participated in a lively exchange during four panel discussions. The discussion themes were "The Convention after 10 years: accomplishments and future challenges"; "Impacts of climate change, adaptation measures and sustainable development"; "Technology and climate change"; and "Mitigation of climate change: policies and their impacts".

The Buenos Aires conference was attended by some 6,200 government officials, UN and NGO observers and journalists. The next annual conference, consisting of COP 11 (for the Convention) and COP/MOP 1 (for the Protocol) will be held from 7 - 18 November 2005.

**Note to journalists:** For further information, please contact Michael Williams at +41 79 409 1528 or [michael.williams@unep.ch](mailto:michael.williams@unep.ch), or, from Monday, the UNFCCC Media Office at +49 228 815 1000 or [press@unfccc.int](mailto:press@unfccc.int). See also [www.unfccc.int](http://www.unfccc.int).