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PRESS RELEASE

Climate change talks resume at Maritim Hotel in Bonn

Bonn, 14 June 2004 – Delegates from the 188 member countries of the United Nations Climate Change Convention will meet here from 16-25 June to prepare for a major ministerial conference to be held in Buenos Aires next December.

The meeting takes place against a backdrop of growing optimism that the Russian Federation is getting ready to ratify the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. Russia's ratification would enable the Protocol to enter into force.

“We are extremely pleased with these recent developments. Based on these positive signals, we trust that the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol will be readily forthcoming”, Joke Waller-Hunter, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC said. “This will certainly give a boost to the climate change process, in a year where we mark the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention. In those ten years much has been set in motion, but much remains to be done if we are to meet the challenge of keeping concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at safe levels, while at the same time addressing the negative impacts that are increasingly felt.”

The meeting in Bonn will make a start with the discussion on how further work on mitigation and adaptation should be addressed in the Convention process, based on the latest assessments of the IPCC. To promote creative thinking, the meeting will include two in-session workshops that will explore new opportunities and solutions.

The first workshop (18 June) will address climate change impacts and risks, including various approaches to assessing risks and to integrating climate change policies into national development plans. The challenge of adaptation to climate change impacts is expected to be one of the themes for the Buenos Aires conference.

The second workshop (19 June) will address efforts to minimize and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It will explore alternative development paths, the relationship between climate change mitigation and other policy objectives (such as economic development, energy and food security) and new low-emissions technologies.

Other issues on the Bonn meeting agenda include the national communications that governments must submit describing their policies and emissions, discussions on forest-related issues, capacity building for developing countries, the creation of an accounting system for the Kyoto Protocol's emissions trading system, technology transfer and the participation of civil society in the international climate change process.



The meeting will also see a special side event on ongoing and planned government sponsored research. The event will explore to what extent this research responds to the needs of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Convention.

In addition, the Executive Board of the Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) will meet on 13 and 14 June.

Some 45 events and presentations on the sidelines of the official talks will enable participants to explore a range of climate change themes more informally. Subjects will include the national communications from several developing countries, "joint implementation", following a successful workshop held in Moscow three weeks ago, the development and transfer of climate-friendly technologies, emissions trading schemes and the outcome of the International Conference on Renewable Energies, which took place in Bonn from 1-4 June. Furthermore, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) will launch the revised GHG protocol corporate standard.

The Tenth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP 10) will be held in Buenos Aires at La Rural exhibition centre from 6 – 17 December 2004.

To enter into force, the Kyoto Protocol must be ratified by 55 Parties to the Convention, including developed countries whose combined emissions of carbon dioxide exceed 55% of that group's total. With the US (accounting for 36% of the developed country total) not intending to ratify, the 55% threshold can only be met with the participation of Russia (17%). The Protocol will enter into force 90 days after Russia's instrument of ratification is received by the United Nations in New York.

Note to journalists: Press accreditation to SB 20 is now open. For information and online-registration, visit <http://unfccc.int/press/accred/index.html>. For more information on accreditation, contact Jazmine Anne Aquino at +49-228-815-1005, +49-160-9721-1564 (mobile) or press@unfccc.int. See also <http://unfccc.int>.
