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## PRESS ADVISORY

### Worldwide celebrations to mark Kyoto Protocol's entry into force on 16 February

Bonn, 10 February 2005 – Across the globe, a series of official events will be held on 16 February 2005 to celebrate the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol.

“The 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2005 marks the beginning of a new era in international efforts to reduce the risk of climate change,” said Joke Waller-Hunter, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Climate Change Convention.

“The Kyoto Protocol offers powerful new tools and incentives that governments, businesses and consumers can use to build a climate-friendly economy and promote sustainable development,” she said.

A special feature of the commemoration will be a “Kyoto Relay of Messages”, with the Minister of Environment of Japan, Ms. Yuriko Koike, serving as Master of Ceremonies. Starting in Kyoto at 10.00 p.m. (1.00 p.m. UTC/GMT), some ten dignitaries will exchange messages via video hook-up.

Messages will be delivered by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan; the 2004 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Ms. Wangari Maathai; President of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties and Minister of Health and Environment of Argentina, Mr. Ginés González García; the Minister and Vice Chairman of National Development and Reform Commission of China, Mr. Jiang Liu; the President of the European Commission, Mr. José Manuel Barroso, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom, Ms. Margaret Beckett; the Minister of the Environment of Canada, Mr. Stéphane Dion; the Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany, Mr. Jürgen Trittin; and the UN Ambassador from Micronesia, Mr. Masao Nakayama.

The Relay of Messages will be preceded at 7.30 p.m. (10.30 p.m. UTC/GMT) by a Commemorative Symposium. The Symposium and Relay of Messages is being held at the Kyoto International Conference Hall where the Protocol was originally adopted on 11 December 1997.

The symposium and the message relay will be webcast live in English and Japanese at <<http://www.kyoto-protocol.jp/>>. The webcast will also be made available after the event on-demand.



The day's celebrations will conclude with at 11.00 p.m. (2.00 p.m. UTC/GMT) with a press conference by Minister Koike and UNFCCC Executive Secretary Joke Waller-Hunter.

The entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol will also be marked in other cities around the world. In Brussels, for example, the occasion will be celebrated by members of the European Parliament and by the European Commission. In India, the Ministry of Environment and Forests will organize a workshop "Clear Skies India", while Morocco's Ministry for Planning, Water and Environment is organizing a nation-wide TV broadcast and seminar in Casablanca. The City of Bonn, the German NGO Forum and the UNFCCC secretariat will host an event in Bonn. For more information on these and other events, please consult the full listing on [http://unfccc.int/meetings/kyoto\\_eif/items/3363.php](http://unfccc.int/meetings/kyoto_eif/items/3363.php).

The Kyoto Protocol's entry into force means that from 16 February 2005:

- 1) Thirty-five industrialized countries and the European Community are legally bound to reduce their combined emissions of six major greenhouse gases during the five-year period 2008-2012 to below 1990 levels.
- 2) The international carbon trading market receives a strong market signal. The Protocol's "emissions trading" regime enables industrialized countries to buy and sell emissions credits amongst themselves; this market-based approach will improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of emissions cuts.
- 3) The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) gets a major boost. The CDM encourages investments in developing-country projects that promote sustainable development while limiting emissions.
- 4) The Protocol's Adaptation Fund, established in 2001, can become operational to assist developing countries to cope with the negative effects of climate change.

**Note to journalists:** For additional information, please visit <http://unfccc.int> or contact Ms. Carrie Assheuer at tel: (49-228) 815-1005 or e-mail: [press@unfccc.int](mailto:press@unfccc.int). In Kyoto, please contact Takashi Ohmura, Deputy Director, Policy and Coordination Division, Global Environment Bureau, Ministry of the Environment at tel: (81-3) 5521-8243, fax: (81-3) 3504-1634, or e-mail: [kyoto216@env.go.jp](mailto:kyoto216@env.go.jp). See also <http://www.env.go.jp/en/>