

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
Bonn, 21 March 2014**

I am pleased to congratulate the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change on the 20th anniversary of its entry into force, and I commend all those who made it possible.

The Convention has galvanized the world to seek multilateral solutions to the grave threat of climate change. Its Kyoto Protocol established the world's first greenhouse gas reduction treaty, with binding commitments for industrialized countries, and set the stage for the establishment of the world's carbon markets. The Clean Development Mechanism and Joint Implementation initiatives have enabled emissions trading and carbon offsets in the developing and developed worlds. The REDD+ programme is helping to place value on carbon stored in forests and reduce emissions from deforestation and land degradation. Finance, technology transfer and capacity building have unlocked access by developing countries to public and private resources. In aggregate, the UNFCCC has been a major catalyst in the growing developmental shift to clean technology, renewable energy, improved efficiency and adaptation.

At the same time, considerably greater ambition is needed to match the scale of the global challenge posed by climate change. Greenhouse gases are at their highest atmospheric concentration in 800,000 years. People everywhere – especially the poorest and most vulnerable – are experiencing the growing effects of unpredictable and increasingly extreme weather patterns.

Two decades of work by the UNFCCC and its Parties have created the infrastructure to spur a resilient, low-carbon global economy. Our challenge now is to use this machinery – not only to tackle climate change but to deliver sustainable energy for all, make the air in our cities fit to breathe, generate decent jobs and help eradicate extreme poverty. These are all mutually reinforcing components of the post-2015 development agenda.

Governments have agreed to reach a universal new climate agreement by 2015. To support them, I will convene a Climate Summit on 23 September 2014 to mobilize political will and showcase action that can help to raise ambition levels worldwide. I have invited world leaders, along with senior representatives of civil society and the private sector, to work together for transformative results.

We know what we need to do, and how to do it. As we mark this anniversary, let us rediscover the commitment that brought the Convention to life. Let us work

together for a meaningful climate agreement that will set the world on a sustainable path for generations to come.