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PRESS RELEASE

UN Secretary-General: "Eyes of the world" on Ministers and Heads of State meeting at United Nations climate change conference in Bali

(Nusa Dua, 12 December 2007) – 144 ministers and high-level government representatives along with 6 heads of state gathered in Bali on Wednesday to begin the high level segment of the United Nations Climate Change Conference -Bali, 2007, which is expected to launch negotiations on a new global deal on climate change.

The conference, the thirteenth Conference of the 192 Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the third meeting of the 176 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, is being attended by more than 11,000 people, making it the largest UN climate change meeting ever held.

Speaking at the opening of the high-level segment, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon told participants that the grim projections made by the scientists of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) this year, including rising sea levels, more frequent and less predictable floods and severe droughts, meant the "the time to act is now."

Calling climate change "the moral challenge of our generation," the UN Secretary-General said "the eyes of the world" were on negotiators meeting in Bali. "Succeeding generations depend on us," he said. "We cannot rob our children of their future."

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer spoke of the need to translate the IPCC's science into clear policy. "Business is ready to move into the low-emissions era, but needs the appropriate policy framework from governments to do so," he said. Ministers could do this by launching formal negotiations at Bali, agreeing on an ambitious agenda and setting 2009 as the deadline for negotiations.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said there was an emerging consensus on the building blocks of a climate agreement and that a new deal must be comprehensive, involving all nations.

He said that developed countries needed to "continue to take the lead on curbing emissions" and stressed the importance of acting globally, whilst providing incentives for countries, businesses, and individuals to act on climate change.

" Our atmosphere can't tell the difference between emissions from an Asian factory, the exhaust from a North American SUV, or deforestation in South America or Africa," he said.



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About the UNFCCC

With 192 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol has to date 176 member Parties. Under the Protocol, 36 States, consisting of highly industrialised countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.