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PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali poised for political breakthrough

(Nusa Dua, 3 December 2007) – The United Nations Climate Change Conference - Bali, 2007 got underway Monday, poised for a breakthrough in international climate change negotiations.

The two-week 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 expected to result in negotiations on a climate change deal for the period post-2012, the year the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol expires.

"The scientific debate has been conclusively laid to rest by the latest scientific findings from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - climate change is unequivocal and accelerating," said Indonesian Environment Minister and President of the conference, Rachmat Witoelar.

"Countries now have to agree on the agenda for the negotiations. This will cover the key areas for the new climate change deal and what the organisational and procedural arrangements are to get to this result," he said.

President Witoelar clearly pointed out that the Bali conference will not deliver a fully negotiated climate change deal.

"However, whilst the launch of negotiations and a clear deadline of 2009 to end the negotiations would constitute a breakthrough, anything short of that would constitute a failure," he added.

Areas which countries have already indicated a new deal is likely to cover are mitigation - including reducing emissions from deforestation - adaptation, technology and financing.

In addition to the future climate change process, other important ongoing issues will be under negotiation at Bali. These include adaptation to climate change, the management and operation of a fund for adaptation, technology transfer, reducing emissions from deforestation and issues relating to the international carbon market spawned by the Kyoto Protocol.

"It is essential that vulnerable developing countries are in a position to draw up plans to prepare for climate change impacts," said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer. "It is also



essential that agreement is reached on how the Kyoto Protocol's Adaptation Fund is managed so that the Fund can begin financing real adaptation projects," he added.

Progress on technology is needed to reach agreement on a framework for technology cooperation for the next few years. The UNFCCC's Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGTT) facilitates access by developing countries to clean technologies.

A decision to reduce emissions from deforestation in developing countries is anticipated to include an agreement on methodological work on measuring avoided emissions, pilot projects in developing countries and resources for developing countries to do this.

For the UNFCCC Executive Secretary, ongoing work to strengthen the Kyoto Protocol's clean development mechanism is indicative of how industrialised countries can continue to take the lead in reducing global emissions.

"Action in the North is needed to fuel clean growth in the South," he said. "Whilst it is clear that we will need to continue using fossil fuels for some time to come, we can't afford conventional technologies to continue to keep a grip on the world," he added.

According to Yvo de Boer, items relating to the ongoing work under the Convention and Protocol need to be speedily concluded at Bali in order to free up the negotiation capacity needed for the post-2012 process.

"Parties need to create the tool box that can reduce emissions cost-effectively and enable economic growth, he said. "The final step of the two-year negotiating process will be to define targets and the type of legal instrument that is needed to make the new international deal work," he added.

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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.

About the CDM

Under the CDM, projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries and contribute to sustainable development can earn certified emission reduction (CER) credits. Countries with a commitment under the Kyoto Protocol buy CERs to cover a portion of their emission reduction commitments under the Treaty. There are currently more than 840 registered CDM projects in 49 countries, and about another 1800 projects in the project registration pipeline. The CDM is expected to generate more than 2.5 billion CERs by the time the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends in 2012, each equivalent to one tonne of carbon dioxide.