



**Regional Briefing by UN organizations  
for delegates to the Bangkok Climate Change Talks  
Bangkok, 29 September 2009**

**Opening remarks by Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary  
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Ms. Heyzer, Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP,  
Distinguished Delegates and Observers,  
UN colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address you at this UN briefing. I would like to thank Ms. Heyzer for convening the meeting. I think it is a splendid initiative to provide an overview of what different international organizations in this region are doing to support concrete climate change actions on the ground.

I am glad to see representatives from UNDP, UNEP, FAO, UNISDR and the ADB present here. It shows the engagement of these agencies with climate change, and underlines their readiness to act and interact and get an optimal result from their initiatives. I applaud that.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The time when climate change was seen merely as an environmental issue lies far behind us, and rightly so. Thanks to increasing scientific evidence, it has become common knowledge that climate change cuts across all aspects of society.

If we don't enhance action now, climate change will seriously damage economies, infrastructure, food production, the availability of water and people's health and livelihoods.

Clearly, climate change is a development issue and can only be successfully addressed if it is treated as such. It is about building climate-resilient societies. It is about steering economic growth into a green, low-emissions direction. It is about enabling developing countries to pursue their goals of economic growth and poverty eradication through sound, sustainable development that will literally not wash away.

This region is characterized by a wide variety of socio-economic situations in different countries. But countries have something in common as well: they are already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Typhoons, floods and extreme weather events regularly make headlines in this part of the world. The Philippines are the most recent, tragic example.

The impacts are likely to become more intense over time. Dealing with emergency situations, reducing disaster risks and increasing climate resilience is a necessity for this region.

As you know, international climate change negotiations are currently at full speed to reach a comprehensive outcome at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December. One of the key elements of a Copenhagen deal is increased support for developing countries to step up their efforts to deal with climate change impacts.

That was one of the key messages from the Climate Change Summit of more than 100 Heads of State and Government convened by the UN Secretary-General in New York last week. The Summit also made a clear call for an outcome in Copenhagen that will significantly scale up financial and technical resources to enable developing countries to shift their economies to a low-emissions future.

Negotiators here in Bangkok will now need to make real progress and translate the political will expressed by world leaders into concrete texts that can be part of a Copenhagen deal.

I do not have a crystal ball to predict what will eventually be written into a Copenhagen text, but one thing is clear: the results that Copenhagen produces will have to be implemented on the ground. This is where the contribution of international organizations, as represented here, will prove to be essential.

Ms. Heyzer just mentioned that the international organizations in this region are already very active in providing support for adaptation and green growth. It is clear that the need for such support will increase as a result of Copenhagen. Countries can benefit from your assistance, for example, to further develop and implement adaptation plans and national appropriate mitigation actions. They need support in terms of finance, technology and capacity building to do this.

For this assistance to be effective and beneficial, it must be provided in a coherent way. One of the Secretary-General's priorities is to ensure that "the UN stands ready to deliver as one." This calls for improved inter-agency cooperation and coordination.

Different initiatives have been launched or are underway, at the country level, at the regional level and at the global level.

I see today's meeting at ESCAP as an example of such improved cooperation and coordination on a regional level in the Asia Pacific. There are experiences to share and lessons to learn from one another. I therefore hope this initiative to bring you together will prove to be a success and will be perceived as valuable and helpful by all of you, in particular by the member states that we - as international organizations - serve.

Thank you.

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