

**Opening statement by UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres at  
press conference in New York, 23 September 2010**

We are barely two months before the UN climate change conference in Cancun -- the place where governments need to take the next firm step on humanity's long journey to meet the full scale challenge of climate change.

Their negotiating session in Tianjin, just a week from now, is where governments will need to cut down the number of options they have on the table, identify what is achievable in Cancún and muster political compromises that will deliver what needs to be done at Cancún.

Governments from both industrialised and developing worlds have made many pledges to cut and limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Industrialised countries have promised both short and long-term funding to help developing countries deal with climate change.

Governments are converging on the need to mandate a full set of ways and means to launch a new wave of global climate action.

At Cancún, they can decide how and when to capture these promises in accountable and binding ways. They can deliver the short-term finance for the urgent needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and they can decide on a package of measures to act.

This year has presented us with a series of disasters that have illustrated the vulnerability of all humanity to extreme climate events.

Such impacts on society and economies are a mild taste of what science says will come, if we do not continuously raise our ambition to protect the global environment.

There are four major trends shaping the future -- energy supply and security, natural resource depletion, population growth and climate change. And unchecked climate change is the flame that would make the other three burn most seriously.

Governments can stand together to turn these four threats into a new development paradigm that harnesses the full power of society, science and business ... or they will fail divided.

Let me be clear - there is no magic bullet, no one climate agreement that will solve everything right now. To expect that is naïve - it does not do justice to the crucial steps already achieved since the beginning of the Convention and it dangerously ignores the need to keep innovating.

However, I am certain the world can do this step by step .. but only if we keep on walking firmly in the right direction, including at Cancún.