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## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNFCCC Executive Secretary: Governments have unavoidable responsibility to make clear progress towards 2011 climate objectives**

(Bonn, 6 June 2011) – Speaking on the first day of the UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn, Germany (6-17 June), UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres said governments have an unavoidable responsibility to make clear progress towards the 2011 climate objectives which they had agreed in Cancun.

“Governments lit a beacon in Cancun towards a low-emission world which is resilient to climate change. They committed themselves to a maximum global average temperature rise of 2 degrees Celsius, with further consideration of a 1.5 degree maximum,” she said.

“Now, more than ever, it is critical that all efforts are mobilized towards living up to this commitment,” she said.

Ms. Figueres’s reminder comes against the backdrop of stark new warnings of a sharp rise in the volume and concentration of greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere.

Last week, the Paris-based International Energy Agency estimated that 2010 emissions from global energy generation returned to record highs, representing an unexpectedly sharp rebound from the effects of the financial crisis. Also last week, the US government’s Hawaii-based Mauna Loa laboratory - a key scientific monitor for global climate change - reported that carbon dioxide concentrations peaked yet again in May, at just under 395 parts per million.

Speaking about expectations for the Bonn meeting, Ms. Figueres said that negotiators are working hard to provide clarity on the architecture of the future international climate regime to reduce global emissions fast enough to avoid the worst climate change. A second key field of work relates to the design of the finance, technology and adaptation institutions agreed in Cancun that will allow developing countries to build their own sustainable futures and adapt to climate change successfully.

“Governments have a very ambitious agenda, which goes all the way from the procedural to the political. They are arriving here with high expectations of themselves and their partners and a decisive willingness to come out of Bonn with significant progress,” she said.

Ms. Figueres drew attention to the growing momentum of global climate action which governments need to capitalize on.



“Countries, including the biggest economies, are building new policies that promote low-carbon growth. The private sector continues to increase low-carbon investment and demands bigger, better ways to do more. And we are seeing an inexorable increase in the effectiveness of clean technology and drops in its price,” the UN’s top climate change official said. “The clean and renewable energy revolution has already begun - the challenge is to complete it in time,” she added.

The Bonn UN Climate Change Conference (6-17 June) is being attended by more than three thousand participants from 183 countries, including government delegates, representatives from business and industry, environmental organisations and research institutions. The Bonn meeting is designed to prepare the UN Climate Conference in Durban at the end of the year (28 November - 9 December).

### **About the UNFCCC**

With 195 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 been ratified by 192 of the UNFCCC Parties. Under the Protocol, 37 States, consisting of highly industrialized 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.

See also: [unfccc.int](http://unfccc.int)

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