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PRESS RELEASE

Governments set to seal ambitious international climate change deal in Copenhagen (update)

[adds comments of Chairs]

(Copenhagen, 6 December 2009) – One day ahead of the historic UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, the UN's top climate change official expressed confidence that the meeting would deliver a comprehensive, ambitious and effective international climate change deal.

"Within two weeks from Monday, governments must give their adequate response to the urgent challenge of climate change," said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer. "Negotiators now have the clearest signal ever from world leaders to craft solid proposals to implement rapid action," he added.

Referring to numerous emission reduction pledges that developing and developed countries have made in the run-up to COP 15, the UN's top climate change official said there was unprecedented political momentum to clinch an ambitious deal in Copenhagen.

"Never in 17 years of climate negotiations have so many different nations made so many firm pledges together," he said. "So whilst there will be more steps on the road to a safe climate future, Copenhagen is already a turning point in the international response to climate change."

Yvo de Boer spoke of three layers of action that governments must agree to in the course of the coming two weeks: fast and effective implementation of immediate action on climate change; ambitious commitments to cut and limit emissions, including start-up funding and a long-term funding commitment; and a long-term shared vision on a low-emissions future for all.

As of 2010, immediate action will need to begin on reducing emissions, adapting to the inevitable effects of climate change, delivering adequate finance, technology, reducing emission from deforestation in developing countries and capacity-building.

According to the UN's top climate change official Yvo de Boer, developed countries will need to provide fast-track funding on the order of at least 10 billion USD a year through 2012 to enable developing countries to immediately plan and launch low emission growth and adaptation strategies and to build internal capacity. At the same time, developed countries will need to indicate how they intend to raise predictable and sustainable long-term financing and what their longer-term commitments will be.



Stressing the issue of immediate action, Michael Zammit Cutajar, Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention said: "Copenhagen must be a success that delivers the promise of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, that will change the way we act and cooperate in addressing climate change."

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, an aggregate emission reduction by industrialised countries of between minus 25% and 40% over 1990 levels would be required by 2020 in order to stave off the worst effects of climate change, with global emissions falling by at least 50% by 2050. Even under this scenario, there would be an only a 50% chance of avoiding the most catastrophic consequences.

John Ashe, Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I (industrialised) Parties under the Kyoto Protocol spoke both of the need raise the level of ambition of developed countries with regard to individual targets and the need to make rapid progress on the tools and rules that developed countries can use to reach their targets, such as carbon market mechanisms, land use and land use change and new gases. "A strong, clear agreement that incorporates all the outstanding issues under the Kyoto Protocol will have to be part of a successful Copenhagen agreement," he said.

More than 15,000 participants, including delegates from 192 countries, are expected to take part in the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (7 to 18 December).

UNFCCC Press Office contacts:

http://unfccc.int/meetings/cop_15/media/items/5070.php

About the UNFCCC

With 193 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 190 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.