



For use of the media only;  
not an official document.

## PRESS RELEASE

### UNFCCC Executive Secretary awarded honorary doctorate

Bonn, 30 September 2005 – Joke Waller-Hunter, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), has been awarded a doctorate 'honoris causa' by Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. The ceremony took place on 28 September 2005. The official degree was presented to her by Prof. Dr. Pier Vellinga, Dean of the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences, and Prof. Dr. Taede Sminia, Rector Magnificus of the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. The prominent academicians praised the Executive Secretary for her "contribution to society through her outstanding work in the field of sustainable development and protection of the global climate."

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed Joke Waller-Hunter to her present position in 2002. A national of the Netherlands, Ms. Waller-Hunter was formerly Director of the Environment Directorate of OECD from February 1998 to April 2002. From 1994 to 1998, she was Director of the Division for Sustainable Development. Prior to 1994, she worked for the Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM). As VROM Deputy Director for international environmental affairs, she was actively involved in the preparations for the UN Conference on Environment and Development, "the Earth Summit," held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

Since taking over the role of UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Joke Waller-Hunter has overseen the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, the landmark agreement on limiting greenhouse gas emissions blamed for global warming. Under her leadership, the UNFCCC secretariat has moved into the spotlight as the key agency for the implementation of the Protocol and as an information leader on greenhouse gas emissions data.

**Note to journalists:** For further information, please contact Ms. Carrie Assheuer, Public Information and Media Assistant. See also <<http://unfccc.int>>.