

**UNEP statement in the thematic debate of the GA  
(New York, 31 July 2007)**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me congratulate the president of the GA for having convened this timely thematic debate, and the distinguished panelists for their interesting contributions.

I speak on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Achim Steiner, who was invited to this event, but due to previous commitments could not attend. He expressed his regrets and delegated UNEP's participation to his NY representative.

I don't need to repeat what has been said with clarity during the day. However, I would like to highlight three very important points:

Adaptation: When talking about adaptation we should talk about building resilience to the different effects that climate change is already producing. The most immediate concern of developing countries is the increased variation in the climate, with more droughts and floods and other extreme events, which affect their economic and social development, as well as their environment, their very basis for development and well-being. For this reason, building resilience is crucial. Mainstreaming preventative action into regular investment policies is an effective way to induce and support this goal. We have to introduce mechanisms to finance these actions to help developing countries deal with the impacts of increased variations. While the mitigation actions are developed, and allowed to take hold, the actions toward adaptation must be started immediately, without delay, for the reasons exposed.

Mitigation: The debate today also focused on how to reach the desirable stabilization levels and what role the different actors should play to reach them. There is a very wide range of solutions. New technologies alone will not suffice; we also need behavioral changes leading to different production and consumption patterns. Governments, industry and the individual all have a role to play – and here again, we have to increase our action now!

The importance of the emerging carbon market, of development and transfer of new technologies and increased finance is undisputed. In addition, policy and regulatory frameworks that facilitate the creation of favorable investment climates is needed for taking mitigation and adaptation measures.

Finally, I would like to reaffirm that the ideological basis of this discussion and of the solutions that we need to agree on are the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the right to development. And I would like to note that climate change basically is an environmental problem where the solution lies in making it a key development driver. Having this in mind, will allow us to seek common solutions among developed and developing countries.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.