



GABINETE DO PRIMEIRO MINISTRO

**Message of H. E. the Prime Minister of Portugal
José Sócrates**

UNSG's High-Level Event on Climate Change

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Climate change is one of the greatest challenges humankind has ever faced. The adverse effects of global warming – many of which are already felt – will have a severe impact in our economies, societies, security and environment. These effects do not identify country boundaries, which renders a joint global effort even more crucial. The UN Conference on Climate Change that will take place this December, in Copenhagen, constitutes the major and decisive landmark in the international efforts to fight climate change. The agreement we are working towards in Copenhagen will, without a doubt, affect the world for generations to come.

In line with the positions taken by the European Union, Portugal considers that the fight against climate change is a shared responsibility of all countries in the world. Mitigation commitments of the developed countries are not by themselves enough to avert global warming. Only through a concerted effort, to which both developed and developing countries contribute adequately according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities will have a chance to overcome the severe impacts of climate change.

At the same time, the Portuguese Government is very sensitive to the importance of adaptation to climate change. Firstly, as scientific data indicates, my country is one of the countries in Europe which will be most negatively affected. Due to temperature increases already verified, droughts, floods, heat waves and forest fires are becoming more frequent and intense, also increasing the threat of desertification.

Secondly, Portugal is also fully aware that adaptation in Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries, especially in Africa - which remain the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change – needs to become a priority for the global community. We thus need to scale up international cooperation, in particular through adequate financial support, technology cooperation and capacity building in the field of climate change adaptation.

Portugal strongly believes that new and additional financial resources to support action on mitigation and adaptation, and technology cooperation must be channelled both from public and private sources, to those countries most in need. The creation of new market mechanisms and the enhancement of existing ones are key means for Parties to achieve cost-effective emission reductions.



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The current financial and economic crisis should, therefore, be seen as an opportunity for the promotion of international investment in projects leading to a future low-carbon world economy. If societies restructure their energy consumption patterns into a cleaner and more efficient model they will be contributing decisively to the efforts to fight climate change. This is the reason why my Government has given the utmost priority to the introduction and development of renewable sources of energy *in Portugal*. *We are* now proud of the fact that more than 40% of the electricity produced in my country comes from renewable sources, mainly wind and hydro power, but also increasingly solar power.

Time is running out. The urgency of climate change calls for swift, decisive and robust measures, which can only be effectively put forward with political guidance, at the highest levels of decision. The pace at which negotiations are proceeding needs to be intensified so as to secure agreement in Copenhagen. This High-Level Event, convened by Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon, constitutes a crucial opportunity to provide that guidance and will, without a doubt, pave the way for one of the most important international agreements ever to be concluded among nations.

José Sócrates