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Special Edition

MARRAKECH: UN climate conference COP22

On historic day for climate action, Ban urges sustained momentum for better, safer future

4 November 2016 – As the Paris Agreement on climate change enters into force, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called for the same determination going forward to implement the Agreement as well as to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. “We remain in a race against time. But with the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world has the plans we need to make the shift to a low-emission, climate-resilient path,” Mr. Ban told the press today at the UN Headquarters in New York. “Now is the time to strengthen global resolve, do what science demands and seize the opportunity to build a safer, more sustainable world for all,” he added. In early October, the Paris Agreement cleared the final threshold of 55 countries representing 55 per cent of global emissions required for the accord to enter into effect. Its entry into force was extremely swift, particularly for an agreement that required a large number of ratifications and two specific thresholds. The Agreement calls on countries to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future, and to adapt to the increasing impacts of climate change. A view of the Middelgrunden offshore wind farm. The wind farm was developed off the Danish coast in 2000 and consists of 20 turbines. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe It also aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change and calls for scaled up financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity-building framework to support action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries in line with their own national objectives. Further in his remarks today, Mr. Ban recalled that the present generation to really feel the effects of climate change and the last that can prevent its worst consequences. He added that over the past decade, a “great global coalition” for climate action, including government officials, scientists, faith leaders, business executives and civil society activists around the world was forged and it recognized that the future of people and planet was at stake. “They made today possible,” he said, highlighting: “Today shows us what is possible when we join forces for our common future.”

UN chief discusses role of civil society in the days ahead

Also today, the Secretary-General chief held a meeting with representatives of civil society groups to discuss with them how their organizations could contribute to the objectives of the Paris Agreement, as well as their visions and concerns. In his remarks, Mr. Ban thanked the civil society for their courage, persistence and leadership in realizing the Paris Agreement and called on them to “keep up the fight”, to press for action and to hold governments accountable. “Your voices at the time were clearly heard by the leaders who attended the climate meeting [in Paris last year],” he said. “You showed the climate challenge stakes – and the solutions.” The discussion with the civil society was moderated by David Nabarro, Special Adviser on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and attended by a number of representatives of civil society groups from all over the world. Participating in today’s even were: Keya Chatterjee, Executive Director, US Climate Action Network (on behalf of CAN-International); Angie Fyfe, Executive Director USA, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability; and Naomi Ages, Climate Liability Campaigner, Greenpeace. Pre-recorded video messages were also delivered by: Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC); Alina Saba, Researcher, Mugal Indigenous Women’s Upliftment Institute, Nepal & Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development; Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director, Oxfam International; and Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Instructor, College of the Marshall Islands & Co-Director, Jo-Jikum. Adopted by 196 parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last December in Paris, the Paris Agreement’s central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees

Celsius. On Monday, the next meeting of Parties to the UNFCCC, known by the shorthand COP 22, kicks off in Morocco's Marrakech.

MARRAKECH: UN climate conference to continue momentum after Paris Agreement comes into force

6 November 2016 – Three days after the entry into force of the landmark Paris Agreement, the Marrakesh Conference, which begins Monday, 7 November, in Morocco, will give United Nations Member States and the world the opportunity to maintain momentum on climate action and continue strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change. “Our challenge is to sustain the momentum that has propelled the Agreement into force,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told reporters at UN Headquarters in New York the past Friday, where he convened a meeting with civil society representatives from all over the world and thanked them for the “vision, courage, persistence and leadership [that] made this day happen.” Adopted by 196 States Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last December, the Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. In early October, the accord cleared the final threshold of 55 countries representing 55 per cent of global emissions required for the accord to come into effect within one month. Its entry into force was extremely swift, particularly for an agreement that required a large number of ratifications and the two specific thresholds. The Agreement entered into force in time for the UNFCCC Marrakech Climate Conference, known by the shorthand COP 22, that begins in Morocco this Monday, where the first Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement will open on 15 November. Before the meeting wraps up on 18 November, parties hope to define the rules for the accord and to lay out a viable plan for providing at least \$100 billion a year to developing countries to support climate action. “The UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakech is the crucial next step for governments looking to operationalize the Paris Climate Change Agreement adopted last year,” said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa. A view of the Middelgruden offshore wind farm. The wind farm was developed off the Danish coast in 2000 and consists of 20 turbines. While the Paris Agreement gave clear pathways and a final destination in respect to decisive action on climate change, many of the details regarding how to move forward as one global community in that common direction still need to be resolved. This is a moment of celebration but also a moment of reflection on the task ahead and a point where governments recommit to the new agenda of rapid implementation, not least in pressing forward with adequate support for vulnerable countries to take their own action. With the entry into force of the Agreement just before the Conference, “the dialogue and decisions in Marrakech hold immense potential to accelerate and amplify the immediate response to the challenge recognized in the Paris Agreement. This meeting is therefore incredibly important,” Ms. Espinosa underscored. As such, she encouraged world's governments to work together in the same spirit that produced such success over recent years. “I also encourage leaders of public and private sectors and every citizen to follow the Marrakech Conference proceedings to further understand how you can take action and contribute to the mounting momentum to meet the interlinked global challenges of climate change and sustainable development,” she added. The President-Designate of COP 22, Salaheddine Mezouar, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, said: “Marrakesh will be the COP of inflexion. Besides moving forward on major

negotiation areas, action is taking more space and creating a tangible bridge between our vision for a brighter future and the implementation of concrete climate responsible projects on the ground.” “We, Parties as well as non-State actors, have here a real opportunity to emphasize this momentum, celebrate successes and share experiences and learning to set inclusively the path forward for action,” he added. COP 22 will include a number of meetings and high-level events , including the high-level segment to be attended by dozens of chiefs of State and Government, on Tuesday 15 November. Other events include the facilitative dialogue on enhancing ambition and support, the ministerial high-level dialogue on climate finance, and the high-level event on enhancing climate action. Side events are also scheduled and a number of them are clustered around thematic days, including Africa Day, Climate Justice Day, Education Day, Gender Day, Farmers, Day, and Young and Future Generations Day. “We remain in a race against time. But with the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world has the plans we need to make the shift to a low-emission, climate-resilient path”, the UN Secretary-General said on Friday.

MARRAKECH: ‘The eyes of the world are upon us,’ chair of UN conference says as new round of climate talks opens

7 November 2016 – The United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as ‘COP 22,’ opened today in Marrakech, Morocco, just days after the entry into force of the landmark Paris Agreement which has now been ratified by 100 countries. “This conference comes within a climate of hope and of legitimate aspirations for all of humanity,” said the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, Salaheddine Mezouar, who was elected today by acclamation as President of COP 22, formally the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). “The unprecedented mobilization of the international community and its political will, expressed at the highest levels, have been crowned by the rapid entry into force of the Paris Agreement. This is unrivaled progress [...] and now we must build on this momentum, give tangible meaning to this major step forward through decisions geared towards implementation,” he stated. In early October, the accord cleared the final threshold of 55 countries representing 55 per cent of global emissions required for it to come into effect within one month. Its entry into force was extremely swift, particularly for an agreement that required a large number of ratifications and the two specific thresholds. The Agreement entered into force in time for COP 22, where the first Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement will open on 15 November. Before the meeting wraps up on 18 November, parties hope to define the rules of implementation of the Paris Agreement and establish a viable plan to provide financial support to developing countries to support climate action. In his remarks today, Mr. Mezouar urged participants “to be more ambitious,” and stressed that “the eyes of the world are on us” [...] “We have a huge responsibility before humanity and we must join forces in order to address the needs of the most vulnerable populations. We must provide them with the resources to adapt to the disastrous consequences of climate change.” Meanwhile, in her remarks, Patricia Espinosa, the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, told the opening of the Conference that the rapid entry into force of the Paris accord “is a clear cause for celebration, but it is also a timely reminder of the high expectations that are now placed upon us all” “Achieving the aims and ambitions of the Paris Agreement is not a given”, she continued, underscoring that: “Marrakech is our moment to take forward climate action at the international and national levels as a central pillar of the successful realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is our opportunity to take the next steps towards

an inclusive, sustainable path for every man, woman and child." Ms. Espinosa underlined key areas in which work needs to be taken forward. She stressed that finance is flowing, but it is not enough. Moreover, nationally determined contributions now need to be integrated into national policies and investment plans. She said support for adaptation needs to be given higher priority, and progress on the loss and damage mechanism has to be ensured to safeguard development gains in the most vulnerable communities. The President of COP 21, which agreed the Paris accord last year, Ségolène Royal, French Minister of Environment, Energy and the Sea, who has passed the baton to Mr. Mezouar, welcomed the ratification of the Paris Agreement by 100 countries as of this past Sunday. "It's an historic event," she said at a press conference just before the official opening of the COP 22, where she urged all countries that have not ratified the Paris Agreement to do so, if possible, during the Marrakech Conference "and beyond that, by the end of this year." Ms. Royal said that the Kyoto Protocol, which was signed in December 1997 and aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, took seven years to enter into force. "[The clock is ticking] because the year that just ended was the warmest, because the melting of glaciers is accelerating, because desertification is devastating, because the massive urban concentrations call for a new model urban development," she continued. Ms. Royal stressed the importance of climate justice, particularly for Africa. "Africa is the great challenge of [this Conference]. COP 22 is an African COP, and that is where the priority and hope are," she said. "In Africa, climate change is cruel and unfair. The continent suffers the most through no fault of its own. Among the 50 countries which are the most [affected] by global warming, 36 are located in sub-Saharan Africa." Non-governmental organizations present at COP 22, including the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Climate Action Network, also welcomed the entry into force of the Paris Agreement but said at press conferences that there was still a long way to go, particularly in terms of funding and concrete implementation of commitments.

MARRAKECH: Civil society vital to drive momentum on Paris Agreement targets, say 'Climate Champions'

8 November 2016 – Beyond the work of governments, other stakeholders such as businesses, cities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have a crucial role to play in implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change, 'Climate Champions' Laurence Tubiana and Hakima El Haité said today in Marrakech, where the United Nations conference known as 'COP 22' is under way. Ms. Tubiana, French Ambassador on climate change, and Ms. El Haité, Moroccan Minister in charge of Environment, were appointed Climate Champions by the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris last year (COP 21), where nations adopted the landmark Agreement, which calls on countries to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future, and to adapt to the increasing impacts of the phenomenon. The two high-level Champions were tasked with heeding the call made at COP 21 and taking forward the idea that mobilizing stronger and more ambitious climate action by all Parties and non-Party stakeholders is urgently required if the Paris goals are to be achieved.

Just last week, on 4 November when the Paris Agreement entered into force, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon convened at UN Headquarters in New York a special meeting with civil society representatives, thanking them for their courage, persistence and leadership in

realizing the Paris Agreement and calling on them to “keep up the fight,” to press for action and to hold governments accountable. Ms. Tubiana and Ms. El Haité have meanwhile set out a detailed agenda to boost cooperative action between governments, cities, business, investors and citizens to cut emissions rapidly and help vulnerable nations adapt to climate impacts and build their own clean energy, sustainable futures. They have also launched a consultative process in order to seek the views of governments and non-State stakeholders on this vision. During COP 22, several thematic days have been planned, including on forests, water, cities, energy, transport and agriculture. “In Paris, it was about momentum, enthusiasm and political commitment. Now the question is how we will implement and how we will conduct a race against time,” said Ms. Tubiana during a press conference in Marrakech on about the launch of the Champion’s ‘Global Climate Action Agenda’ to mobilize non-State actors. The [Agenda] “is really the response to this race against time that everyone, governments first, but also cities, businesses, civil society, indigenous people, youth, women movements” is part of, she added. “We can’t be complacent,” underscored Ms. Tubiana. “We have everything to do, we are lagging behind.” She added that the [Action Agenda] “is a way to accelerate the movement, to accelerate action, develop cooperation, to do it faster, better, cheaper and to get everyone on the same page [...] It is about concrete action on the ground, how to transform the transport, how to have better cities, how really to stop deforestation,” she added. Ms. El Haité stressed that 80 per cent of the decisions on climate action are implemented by non-State actors. “I think it is very important for all of us to recognize that the non-State actors are already moving and there are many [actions], initiatives and coalitions and they are very active,” she said. “This is the first time we are building a real partnership between the non-State actors and the actors,” she added. “We think it is very important to have these partnerships. We have built for many years walls between the negotiators and the parties and the real world and the non-State actors. Today we need to build bridges between them.” Asked by the *UN News Centre* about the link between climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Ms. Tubiana noted that there is a “single development agenda” and that climate is “a part of that development agenda.” “No doubt the negotiations on implementation are more advanced in the climate area than in other areas, but it is all the same thing [...] There is one agenda that governments must implement and this new development model should really be supported by the citizens, the businesses, the financial sector in each country, and internationally,” she added.

MARRAKECH: New initiatives on forest protection give boost to climate action agenda

9 November 2016 – The global effort to protect and sustainably manage forests and deliver on climate change targets got a major boost at the United Nations Climate Conference (COP 22) taking place in Marrakech, Morocco, where several projects on protecting woodlands worldwide were announced. Forest actors at the meeting, formally known as the 22nd Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), expressed cautious optimism, welcoming the progress made on forest protection but warned against complacency.

“We know that the annual net loss of natural forests is slowing – a 25 per cent decrease in 2015 compared to 2000. But this is very much about restoration, regeneration of forests and reforestation, [but] unfortunately tropical forest clearing continues,” said ‘Climate Champion’ Laurence Tubiana at a press conference yesterday. Ms. Tubiana, the French Ambassador on

climate change, and Hakima El Haité, Moroccan Minister in charge of Environment, were appointed Climate Champions by the previous UN Climate Conference, known as COP 21. "It is improving, the action was effective, but we have to improve it if we want to be really consistent with the [Paris targets]," Ms. Tubiana added, referring to the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change, which was adopted in the French capital last year and calls on countries to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future, and to adapt to the increasing impacts of the phenomenon. Also at press conference, René Castro Salazar, the Assistant Director-General for Forestry of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), also warned against complacency. "Forests are still disappearing at close to three million hectares per year [...] especially natural forests. We hope the remaining four billion hectares of forest of the world will be sustainably managed, that will be the only way to preserve the resource. Addressing climate change cannot be done without a sustainable forest management programme," he underscored. In efforts to tackle climate change, forests play an important role as they absorb and store carbon as trees grow, thereby eliminating emissions from the atmosphere. But deforestation and forest degradation have the opposite effect: they release carbon into the atmosphere. Currently, deforestation and forest degradation are responsible for 12 per cent of global carbon emissions. "Forests are one of the largest and most cost-effective responses we have to climate change," said Helen Clark, Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), said in a news release. According to Mr. Castro Salazar, healthier forests not only help combat climate change but also contribute to many other global development goals by providing food, income, fuel and shelter. The sense of prudent optimism was shared by the Senior Director of the Forest and Climate Program of the non-governmental organization WWF, Josephina Brana-Varela. "There is a lot of progress. We are on the right path but we need to do it faster," she said at the press conference. To that end, she drew attention to the "very unusual coalition of partners" that has emerged around the issue, including developed countries, developing countries, corporations, private sector actors, indigenous people, and multilateral organizations. A dozen initiatives were presented yesterday at COP 22 by countries from Africa, Asia and South America during Forest Action Day, which is part of the Global Climate Action Agenda initiative by France and Morocco to boost cooperative action between governments, cities, business, investors and citizens. Among initiatives, the Government of Indonesia announced that it is implementing a moratorium on clearing super-high-carbon intact peatlands. Colombia announced forest plans linked to the peace process, including an initiative to put very large areas of forest under the control of indigenous people. The Moroccan Government announced an initiative called 'Strengthened Action in Favor of Forests in the Mediterranean-Sahel Region in the Context of Climate Change' to help countries of that region meet multilateral commitments to forests. "The idea is to form a collaborative partnership throughout the region given the interactions and strong relationships in environmental and socio-economic areas," said the Secretary General of the High Commissioner for water and forests of Morocco, Abderrahim Houmy, at the press conference.

MARRAKECH: UN conference spotlights water, the 'first victim' of climate change, as part of the solution

9 November 2016 – In a first for United Nations climate change conferences, a special day was devoted to action on water issues, providing stakeholders gathered in Marrakech, Morocco, for

the so-called 'COP 22' an opportunity spotlight water as a way of providing solutions to help implement the Paris Agreement. "Water is one of the most impacted resources, but water also provides solutions to these challenges," stressed the President of the World Water Council, Benedito Braga, who said today in a news release issued by the meeting, formally known as the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Water is critical for successful climate change mitigation, as many efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions depend on reliable access to water resources. The Action Day for Water is part of the Global Climate Action Agenda, an initiative of France and Morocco to boost cooperation between governments, cities, companies, investors and citizens on climate change. In an interview with the *UN News Centre*, Hakima El Haité, the Minister in charge of Environment of Morocco and one of the 'Climate Champions' tasked with carrying forward the Agenda, stressed the importance of including water in the discussions on climate change. "Water and climate [are] linked. At school, all of us studied the water cycle," she said. "Water connects everything. To produce energy, some countries have 97 per cent renewable energy from water. So it affects everything. It is crucial for human development, it is crucial for education, it is crucial for health, it is crucial for stability and food security." Ms. El Haité noted that the water community would like to be included in the discussions. She stressed that she and her fellow Climate Champion, Laurence Tubiana, the French Ambassador on climate change, would work to facilitate the dialogue between the [UNFCCC] parties and water stakeholders. Wednesday, the Moroccan Government and its partners launched a *Blue Book on Water and Climate*, which includes recommendations by the international water community. "Water is not only a problem but it is part of the solution," said the Minister of Water of Morocco, Charafat Afailal, at a press conference, adding: "Water is a key factor in human development." According to the Blue Book, only integrated and sustainable water management can help humankind meet the challenges related to water availability, extreme weather events and uncertainty about the resource. It recommends that water be recognized as the "first victim" of climate change and to initiate an action agenda for water. The Moroccan Government also launched the 'Water for Africa' initiative, with the support of the African Development Bank. It aims to render justice to the continent through the adoption of a specific action plan that will mobilize different international political, financial and institutional partners to improve water and sanitation services and management for those most affected by climate change. Seven of the 10 countries most threatened by climate change are in Africa. Water is the first sector through which the African population suffers from the impact of climate change. "Water is not only a story of adaptation, it is about development, it is about climate justice," said Ms. El Haité.

MARRAKECH: Cities are striving to play key role in implementing Paris climate accord

10 November 2016 – The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Marrakech (COP 22), put its spotlight today on cities, towns and regions around the world that are striving to play a key role in implementing the Paris Agreement, which entered into force on 4 November, including by reducing their carbon emissions. "Climate action in and by cities, towns and regions will be instrumental in ensuring that we stay on a 2 degrees Celsius pathway, aiming for 1.5 degree Celsius," said the Secretary General of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Gino Van Begin, at a press briefing on the Conference's "action day" for cities and human settlements. ICLEI is the global network of over 1,500 cities, towns and regions

committed to building a sustainable future. The Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved in December 2015 at the previous Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), known by the shorthand COP 21, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. As an example of cities being active on climate issues, Mr. Van Begin pointed out the establishment of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy from a merger between the European Covenant of Mayors and the Global Compact of Mayors. "Cities can help reduce emissions," said the Chief Scientist at the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Jacqueline McGlade, at the press conference. "The leverage is enormous." The Global Climate Action day on Cities and Human Settlements at COP 22 showcased the potential of local action, focusing on resilience and building efficiency. A new tool was launched to help cities assess their adaptation commitments. Urban areas are at the center of converging global frameworks, not only the Paris Agreement on climate change, but also the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in September 2015, and the New Urban Agenda, adopted last month in Quito, Ecuador, at the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development – or Habitat III. Urban areas represent an estimated 70 per cent of energy-related global emissions. Many actions to adapt urban areas to climate change also have positive mitigation impacts, including renovation of old and construction of new low-energy and energy-efficient buildings. "It is important to see development in cities in a totally different manner," said 'Climate Champion' Laurence Tubiana, at the press conference. "We have to cut the building energy consumption by 50 percent by 2050. It's a big challenge." "Cities can help government implement their NDC (nationally determined contribution) much better and really aim much higher," she added. Ms. Tubiana, the French Ambassador on climate change, and Hakima El Haité, the Moroccan Minister in charge of Environment, were appointed Climate Champions by COP 21. Speaking to the *UN News Centre*, Jacqueline McGlade, said that "every new building, if it was essentially designed around passive heating, could reduce the load on the power supply by 30 to 40 per cent. The problem with some of those is that they cost more in the first stages." Developing efficient transportation networks in cities is also important, she said. "We see that young people today view cities in a very different way than we did in the last 20 [or] 30 years. They see them as small villages, where their social networks actually imply that they can walk everywhere, they can meet and they can do their daily business without a need for actual heavy duty fossil-fueled cars and transport," she added. Ms. McGlade also underscored the importance of vernacular architecture to reduce energy consumption, including through "passive forms of air conditioning." "There is a movement, particularly in developing countries, where the very best of materials, whether it is bamboo or mud or local materials, are actually used in place of cement and some of the more what I would call 'exotic materials' imported from elsewhere," she explained.

MARRAKECH: Efforts to revolutionize transport gaining momentum, UN climate conference told

12 November 2016 – Efforts to revolutionize transport around the world are gaining momentum with more Governments and businesses exploring possibilities for electric vehicles and low-carbon emissions transport systems, said transport experts attending the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Marrakech (COP 22). "The transport sector is very uniquely positioned to deliver both on decarbonisation as well as on human well-being. (...)

Countries are stepping out to it”, underscored Paula Caballero, Global Director, Climate Program of the World Resources Institute, at a press conference on Saturday. She said that the New Urban Agenda adopted at Habitat III, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, in Quito, in October 2016, “very clearly encapsulates that”. “Habitat III was just one month ago and clearly the transformation that is needed in the urban sector, that is needed in our cities, can be driven by transport”, Ms. Caballero added. “It is about ensuring that there is infrastructure for cycling and much better public sector transportation”. Transport counts for 24 percent of energy related greenhouse gas emissions. Without disruptive action, transport emissions can be expected to grow from 7.7 gigatonnes to around 15 gigatonnes by 2050. For 45 percent of countries, transport is the largest source of energy related emissions. At Marrakech Climate Conference, transport experts and leaders took stock of progress made on transport initiatives since the previous UN Climate Conference in Paris (COP 21) last year. Over the last 12 months, the MobiliseYourCity initiative secured 35 million euros in funding and announced the start of developing Sustainable Urban Mobility plans in Morocco and Cameroon. The Global Fuel Economy Initiative (GFEI) is supporting an additional 40 countries to realize the financial, and CO2 benefits of improved vehicle fuel economy. And Airport Carbon Accreditation Scheme now has 173 certified airports worldwide, including 26 carbon neutral airports. The Partnership for Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) launched a global roadmap for decarbonisation of the transport sector at COP 22. SLoCaT is a partnership between international organizations, business sector and NGOs, seeking to promote sustainable transport and focusing on land transport in developing countries. “We are fully on board as the transport sector. We think we are increasingly well organized, we think we have increasing political support and that we have the right ideas”, said the Secretary General of SLoCaT, Cornie Huizenga, at the press conference. The Moroccan Minister in charge of Environment and 'Climate Champion', Hakima El Haité, expressed her optimism for the future. “Transport can be revolutionary tomorrow. We will have solar roads and maybe we will have solar vehicles”, she said at the press conference. “The transport initiatives, by creating a new reality on the ground, increase popular understanding and support for climate action which, in turn, drives up Governments ambition to tackle climate change”, she added.

MARRAKECH: Dozens of heads of State and Government to attend UN climate conference

13 November 2016 – Ten days after the entry into force of the landmark Paris Agreement, dozens of heads of State and Government are expected on Tuesday at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 22), which started in Marrakech, Morocco, on 7 November 2016. Before the Conference wraps up on 18 November, State Parties hope to define the rules for the accord and to lay out a viable plan for providing at least \$100 billion a year to developing countries to support climate action. Adopted by 196 States Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last December, the Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. It entered into force in record time on 4 November 2016. The Marrakech Conference includes a number of meetings and high-level events, including the high-level segment to be

attended by dozens of heads of State and Government, on Tuesday 15 November. During the first week of COP 22, in parallel with the negotiations between the Parties, a series of thematic days on forests, water, cities, energy and transport highlighted the crucial role of non-state actors, including businesses, cities and non-governmental organizations, to implement the Agreement. On Saturday, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Patricia Espinosa, co-host of COP 22, welcomed the fact that 105 countries have now ratified the Paris Agreement. "It gives the Agreement a lot of weight and a lot of credibility", she said at a press conference. "It has happened in record time", she added. "So we really hit the ground with this unexpected success in many ways of the entry into force of the Agreement much earlier than expected. But now at the same time we have more urgency to get to work and finalize the elements we need in order to have a fully operational Paris Agreement". The President of COP 22, Salaheddine Mezouar, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, underscored "an extremely positive state of mind, a commitment of everyone to maintain the momentum and help COP 22 be the one we all wanted, a COP of action, a COP of commitment, a COP that confirms the determination of all Parties, the international community as a whole, to continue climate action". Mr. Mezouar stressed that the main priorities of the Moroccan Presidency of COP 22 are to create a bridge between "the world of negotiations and the world of action", to get Parties to increase their national commitments, to focus on climate finance and to transform climate initiatives launched at COP 21 into concrete projects. Asked about the uncertainties raised by the US presidential election, Mr. Mezouar said that the participants of the Marrakech Conference remained "confident" and that it was necessary "to stay the course" and "keep this extraordinary momentum".

MARRAKECH: Deepening South-South cooperation driving climate action among developing countries

14 November 2016 – South-South cooperation is growing, as developing countries are helping each other to address climate change, sustainable development and implementation of the Paris Agreement, said senior United Nations officials and government Ministers at the UN Climate Conference in Marrakech (COP 22). "It is encouraging and inspiring to see how South-South Cooperation is gaining traction," said the Special Advisor of the UN Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Climate Change, Dr. David Nabarro, at the High-Level Forum on South-South Cooperation on Climate Change, one of the event's kicking off the second week of the 22nd Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Dr. Nabarro stressed that the Climate Partnerships for the Global South, also known as Southern Climate Partnership Incubator (SCPI), initiated by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in the margins of the signing ceremony for the Paris Agreement, held at UN Headquarters in New York this past April, "is about making connections." The Paris Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016. The United Nations has launched the SCPI to initiate, facilitate, and support partnerships that will help developing countries address climate change. "SCPI is leveraging the UN system to match the needs of developing countries with counterparts willing and able to meet them. Through the SCPI we can help each one to learn from the other," said Dr. Nabarro, adding that the SCPI has reviewed 300 good cases of bilateral, trilateral and plurilateral partnerships facilitated by the UN, non-governmental organizations and multilateral development banks. The President of COP 22, Salaheddine Mezouar, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, underscored that the South-South cooperation is "not in opposition to North-South or South-

North cooperation." Indeed, he said, through South-South cooperation, "we want to assure that countries of the South are taking charge, that they have much to share and much to bring to each other," he told the participants of the Forum. "As we are in a changing world, the balances of this new world also depend on the strengthening of South-South partnerships and South-South cooperation. [Momentum in both these areas] will help move much faster and will also help developing countries find other levers to meet the challenges they face," he added. The Executive Secretary of UNFCCC, Patricia Espinosa reminded the Forum's participants that "while it is clear that developed countries need to provide support to developing countries to reach their goals of the Paris [that accord] also encourages complimentary support such as South-South cooperation." Indeed, South-South cooperation is rapidly becoming an integral component of international cooperation to address climate change. Dr. Nabarro thanked China for its leadership and generous support to advance South-South cooperation and "for bringing together action on climate and action on sustainable development in such a decisive way." Today's Forum was co-hosted by China, Morocco and the UN. He cited China's flagship programme, the South-South Cooperation Fund on climate change, which "is expanding the capacities of more developing countries to engage in this kind of collaboration." He also stressed China's significant contributions towards regional and global low-carbon transition with a solar alliance and the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI). He also mentioned Brazil, who is leading the efforts on Biofuture Platform, a joint initiative to decarbonize the transport sector. At the High-Level Forum, the Special Representative of China on Climate Change Affairs, Mr. Zhenhua Xie, said that his country was willing to share its experiences in regard with coping with climate change. "We need to promote more South-South cooperation," he said, calling on international organizations to act as "bridges."

MARRAKECH: Ban hails 'new dawn of cooperation on climate change,' urges action on Paris accord

15 November 2016 – Ten days after the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on climate change, world leaders showed strong support for the implementation of this agreement at the opening of the high-level segment of the United Nations Climate Conference in Marrakech, Morocco, (COP 22) today. "Countries have strongly supported the Agreement because they realize their own national interest is best secured by pursuing the common good. Now we have to translate words into effective policies and actions," Mr. Ban said as he opened the High-Level segment of the 22nd Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). "This is critical to protect our planet, safeguard the most vulnerable and drive shared prosperity. Low-emission development and climate resilience will advance all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)", added Mr. Ban. Adopted by 196 States Parties to the UNFCCC last December, the Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved by the previous Conference, known as COP 21, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. In early October, the accord cleared the final threshold of 55 countries representing 55 per cent of global emissions required for it to come into effect within one month. Its entry into force was extremely swift, particularly for an agreement that required a large number of ratifications and the two specific thresholds. The Agreement entered into force in time for COP 22, which has been under way since 7 November. Before the meeting wraps up on Saturday, 18 November, parties hope to define the rules of implementation of the Paris

Agreement and establish a viable plan to provide financial support to developing countries to support climate action. Mr. Ban said that the United Nations will help countries implement the Agreement and he called on developed countries “to honour their commitment to mobilize climate finance – \$100 billion by 2020 – to help developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate vulnerability. The UN chief also said that after a decade of making sure climate change was at the top of the international agenda, he would leave delegations with some key lessons:

1. Multilateral solutions work; acting together, countries achieve more than they ever could alone;
2. Heads of State and Government must take the lead;
3. Whole societies must get engaged;
4. The UN must continue to champion science;
5. Solutions must be funded and expanded; and
6. The UN must continue advancing the moral cause for action.

In his remarks, the President of the UN General Assembly, Peter Thomson, encouraged all Parties to the Paris Agreement to implement and enhance ambition of their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) “without delay.” He added that urgent action on climate change “must be seen as a moral, environmental, scientific, and developmental imperative, guided by ambition, action and equity.” The Executive Secretary of UNFCCC, Patricia Espinosa, stressed in her remarks the need to “accelerate climate action” and “to make climate action a cornerstone of the transformation to truly sustainable development.” “This profound transformation will not be easy and will involve difficult decisions. Leadership is needed now more than ever. And the contribution to this transformation by business, subnational governments, indigenous people, youth, women and many others cannot be overlooked,” she added. Ahead of the official opening of the high-level segment of the Conference, Mr. Ban told a press conference that “every country is aware that climate change is a reality” and “no country, however resourceful or powerful, is immune from the impacts of climate change.”

MARRAKECH: UN seeks to build climate resilience through new initiative

15 November 2016 – As the United Nations Climate Conference under way in Marrakech, Morocco, (COP 22) is discussing implementation of the Paris Agreement, the UN is also seeking to build climate resilience through the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s resilience initiative called A2R (Anticipate, Absorb, Reshape), launched a year ago.

In the past two decades, 4.2 billion people have been affected by weather-related disasters such as floods, droughts and storms. The landmark Paris Agreement has raised the profile of climate resilience. There is now a global goal for climate adaptation and it is recognized that adaptation represents a challenge with local, national and international dimensions. The objective of the Secretary-General’s Initiative on Climate Resilience, a global UN-led, multi-stakeholder initiative, is to accelerate action under its three pillars: anticipate climate hazards and stresses; absorb shocks; and reshape development pathways to foster climate resilience. The initiative was launched in late November 2015 in Paris during the previous Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), known as COP 21, and it brings together governments, international agencies, regional initiatives, the private sector,

civil society and academia. Tondikorey's village chief sits in his garden near the shore of the Niger river. The year's millet harvest was partly destroyed due to the impact of a bug but thanks to the new irrigation system allowing for a second harvest, the chief is confident that his village will get by. Photo: OCHA/Ivo Brandau

The *UN News Centre* discussed the issue of climate resilience with Maarten Van Aalst, Director of the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, who moderated a panel discussion at COP 22 on how countries can adjust their financial decision-making to build climate resilience.

UN News Centre: Resilience seems to cover a wide range of issues. What does the A2R initiative try to accomplish?

Maarten Van Aalst: We all know that the climate is changing, risks are rising. We are seeing more disasters around the world and at the same time we have a growing [global] population to feed. We want to get rid of extreme poverty and the place where all these global ambitions meet is actually this concept of resilience, making sure people can cope with shocks and stresses and can actually thrive to a good development even in a changing climate. What A2R is trying to do is to bring together all the good initiatives that are trying to work on that around the world. There are local Mayors that want to try to keep their cities safe and their citizens in the city prepared for disasters, safe from flooding. It is about working with companies that are looking at their supply chains. It is about looking at national plans that governments are making to adapt to a changing climate. And then it is about bringing all of that together into something that becomes a global ambition. Again, this is global ambition that links to what has already been expressed last year in all these global agreements, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Later on, we had a discussion at the World Humanitarian Summit about how to deal with the increasing burden of disasters and conflicts. All of these goals have already been expressed, and A2R brings all these great initiatives together. It also shows that we are making progress on these agendas. And it is especially important in the Paris Agreement which, on the one hand, commits the world to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, so that risk does not get out of hand in the second half of the century; and on the other hand, it also commits us to building resilience to cope with the risks that are already changing today and will continue to change. So A2R brings together all the stakeholders and makes it visible that we are making progress.

UN News Centre: Adaptation seems to be the 'step-child' of climate action. How will this initiative bring resilience to the forefront of climate action efforts?

Maarten Van Aalst: If you look at the implementation of the Paris Agreement, everyone is now talking about the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Whereas in the Agreement itself, there are actually two big global goals, one is mitigation and the other is adaptation, dealing with the rising risks. And if you look at the most vulnerable countries, their primary concern is actually those risks right now. And part of the deal that was struck in Paris is actually that the [most vulnerable countries] get support, that we are standing together as a global community and that we will help them. It is not just a matter of small projects that come from financing instruments negotiated in the UN. This is something we need to do all together, and what the UN Secretary-General has tried to do with A2R is to galvanize all these initiatives, make them visible, promote them but also ensure that they get the support they need.

Maarten Van Aalst: The resources are of two kinds. One part is the increased resources from the global community. This is the sort of financing mechanism we are also discussing here in Marrakech, the Green Climate Fund; the existing development finance. The second part of it is doing all the things we already do better and smarter. There are trillions (of dollars) of

investments made every year and a lot of that frankly is not made in the smartest way. We are building infrastructure in places where we know there is a high risk of it getting washed away. We are doing agriculture in ways that we know put it at risk to floods and drought. So if we can be smarter with the investments we are making, we can make a lot of progress on resilience without necessarily needing a lot of additional international finance.

MARRAKECH: UN chief urges rapid scale-up in funding to address climate change

16 November 2016 – As the United Nations Climate Conference, known as COP 22, continued its work today in Marrakech, Morocco, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged greater efforts to mobilize funding to address climate change, especially to support developing countries. “Finance and investment hold the key to achieving low-emissions and resilient societies,” Mr. Ban said in remarks read by his Special Advisor on Climate Change, Bob Orr, to a High-Level Ministerial dialogue on climate financing at the 22nd Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UN chief underscored that one of the core objectives of the Paris Agreement, which entered into force on 4 November 2016, is “to make all finance flows consistent with a pathway to low-emissions climate-resilient development.” He noted that there has been progress, in particular in renewable energy. Last December at the previous Conference, known as COP 21, 196 Parties to the UNFCCC adopted the Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved. It aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The Agreement entered into force in time for COP 22, which has been under way since 7 November. Before the meeting wraps up on Saturday, 18 November, parties hope to define the rules of implementation of the Paris Agreement and establish a viable plan to provide financial support to developing countries to support climate action. “We will invest 90 trillion dollars in global infrastructure over the next fifteen years. It would not cost much more to ensure that this infrastructure delivers the low-emission resilient economy envisioned in the Paris Agreement”, added the UN chief. The Secretary-General noted that in Paris, governments collectively reaffirmed their 2009 pledge to mobilize 100 billion dollars per year by 2020, and to continue financing at this level until 2025 to support climate action by developing countries. “This goal is within reach – if we stay focused,” he said. In remarks read by the World Bank Vice-President for sustainable development, Laura Tuck, the President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim, said that his organization is doing its best “to try to mobilize as much as financing as possible.” “It is not just about trying to persuade donors and financiers to put up more money, although we are definitely trying to do that, but it also about creating the environment that crowds in a lot more financing. Even if we have the 100 billion dollars we are talking about, it is not nearly enough to reach our goals,” he added. For the World Bank, the other priority is greening the financial sector. “We are trying to find ways to improve the way the existing banking sector understands and considers the risks of climate smart investments,” Mr. Kim stressed. The Secretary-General stressed that financing is central to building resilience. Last year in Paris, Mr. Ban launched the Initiative on Climate Resilience, or ‘A2R’ – Anticipate, Absorb and Reshape. It has the goal of redoubling efforts to provide climate risk insurance, in close cooperation with the insurance sector. On the margins of COP 22, the Secretary-General also participated in a Summit of African heads of State and Government hosted, by King Mohammed VI of Morocco.

In remarks at the Summit, Mr. Ban reminded participants that Africa is at the forefront of climate change. "Compared to the global average, temperatures are rising higher in this continent. Out of the 50 countries hit hardest by climate change, 36 are in Africa," he added. He said that he has seen climate solutions across Africa. "This continent is dynamic," the Secretary-General underscored, saluting the entrepreneurial spirit across Africa, especially among youth. "Africa has tremendous potential to be a global renewable energy leader. This continent has vast solar, wind and geothermal energy resources," Mr. Ban added, calling on "partners from both developed and developing countries to scale up investment and technical assistance."

MARRAKECH: Middle East and North Africa region taking action to combat climate change

16 November 2016 – Aware of their vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change, countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have begun taking action to confront the phenomenon and today, several highlighted their initiatives at the United Nations Climate Conference in Marrakech, Morocco, known as COP 22. "Climate change will make a difficult situation much worse, and will affect millions of people in the Middle East and North Africa region," World Bank MENA Vice-President Hafez Ghanem told a press conference at the 22nd Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). "Countries in the region are aware of the challenges, and have begun taking action." Agriculture in the MENA region is especially vulnerable to changes in temperature and precipitation. As global temperatures rise, they will rise even faster in MENA, causing more frequent and severe droughts. The 2015 drought in Morocco destroyed more than half the wheat harvest and led to a 1.5 per cent drop in the country's Gross Domestic Output. During a panel discussion on UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Initiative on Climate Resilience at COP 22 on Friday, Saudi Arabia's Chief Climate Negotiator, Khalid Abuleif, said that the region "is going to see a lot of challenges from an ecosystem point of view and from a socio-economic point of view." The challenge is not only about reducing gas emissions but also about raising "our resilience." Mr. Abuleif stressed that as Saudi Arabia is diversifying its economy, any new sector will be put under regulations that will address sustainability and climate resilience. He added that his country is focusing especially on water management, "making sure we are using water in a sustainable manner," and on the protection of coastal zones. Tunisia has announced a 41 per cent emission reduction by 2030. Most importantly, 13 per cent will be based on national efforts, while the rest will come from support provided by the international community. A week after COP 22 concludes, Tunisia will host an international investment conference (29-30 November) to mobilize \$2.4 billion dollars, 40 per cent of which will be allocated to projects pertaining to the 'green economy,' with a focus on renewable energy. In Morocco, to meet the country's commitments on climate action, the Bank Al Maghrib (Central Bank of Morocco) recently unveiled the road map of the Moroccan financial sector in climate financing. That country has also taken steps to adapt its agriculture, with better water management and more climate-resistant crops, while also lowering its emissions by eliminating most energy subsidies and with the construction of the large solar plant in Ouarzazate, World Bank senior official Hafez Ghanem noted. "This is the kind of comprehensive climate action we will support across the region, with a special focus on the poorest and most vulnerable," he added. The World Bank Group announced on Tuesday a new plan to ramp up support for countries in the MENA region by nearly doubling the portion of Bank financing dedicated to

climate action, taking it to around \$1.5 billion dollars per year by 2020. The plan focuses on four priorities: food and water security; sustainable cities adapted to new climate conditions; the transition to low-carbon energy; and the protection of the poorest that are most exposed to the impacts of climate change. The current Conference follows the adoption by 196 UNFCCC States Parties last December, of the Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved, which aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The Agreement entered into force in time for COP 22, which has been under way since 7 November. Before the meeting wraps up on Saturday, 18 November, parties hope to define the rules of implementation of the Paris Agreement and establish a viable plan to provide financial support to developing countries to support climate action.

MARRAKECH: 'We need everyone,' Ban says, urging society-wide engagement in implementation of Paris climate accord

17 November 2016 – Rallying stakeholders gathered in Marrakech, Morocco, for the United Nations Climate Conference, known as 'COP 22,' Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today urged everyone – “from the local to the global” – including the private sector, cities and civil society, to get involved in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. “We need everyone. And we need action from the local to the global. Partnerships should focus on results today – and make progress for the long-term. We have no time to waste, and much to gain, by acting now,” Mr. Ban told a High-Level event on Accelerating Climate Action. The President of COP 22, Salaheddine Mezouar, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, noted that “without minimizing the eminent responsibility of States,” the contribution of non-State actors serves as a “structuring supplement” to multilateral action against the impacts of climate change. Last December at the previous Conference, known as COP 21, 196 Parties to the UNFCCC adopted the Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved. It aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016, in time for COP 22, which has been under way since 7 November. The Global Climate Action Agenda, launched formally in 2014 at COP 20, in Lima, Peru, aims to mobilize non-State actors in addressing climate change. In Paris the next year, two Climate Champions, Laurence Tubiana, French Ambassador for climate change negotiations, and Hakima El Haité, Moroccan Minister for the Environment, were appointed to accelerate joint action on the Agenda. “We have found committed partners, partners on the move, cooperative partners,” said Ms. El Haité at the high-level meeting. “The business community understands that this is where future growth lies. Investors have realized that this is where sustainable returns can be found.” Ms. Tubiana announced today the launch of the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, with the aim of ensuring that efforts are “more coherent, more continuous, and stronger.” The Partnership “belongs to everyone, all those who seek to extend climate action. It will seek to create space for everyone to work together, remove barriers, understand solutions and see the future in a much more active and optimistic way,” she added. For his part, Mr. Ban said the Action Agenda is “central to this effort” to implement the Paris Agreement on the ground. “We need to immediately drive a radical transformation of the

global economy”, he said, adding that the private sector has a key role to play. The Secretary-General went on to stress the importance of adaptation. Climate resilient innovations are needed to help billions of people adapt to increasing droughts, floods, temperatures and other impacts. “Adaptation is not a luxury. It is a prudent investment in our future”, he said. The UN chief said he was pleased to see so many African countries mobilizing climate action, taking as an example the Adaptation of African Agriculture initiative. “This partnership will help create more resilient food systems on the continent and advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),” he stated. Tuesday, at the opening of the high-level segment of COP 22, dozens of Heads of State and Government showed a strong support for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Before the Conference wraps up on 18 November, parties hope to define the rules for the accord and to lay out a viable plan for providing at least \$100 billion a year to developing countries to support climate action.

MARRAKECH: Countries at UN conference pledge to press ahead with implementation of Paris Agreement

18 November 2016 – As they wrapped up their work today in Marrakech, Morocco, countries gathered at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 22), pledged on Friday to move forward on the implementation of the Paris Agreement, which entered into force two weeks ago. In the Marrakech Action Proclamation, for our climate and sustainable development,” State Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), affirmed their “commitment” to the “full implementation” of the Paris Agreement. They welcomed the “extraordinary momentum on climate change worldwide.” As of Friday 18 November, 111 countries have ratified the Agreement. Last December at the previous Conference, known as COP 21, 196 Parties to the UNFCCC adopted the Paris Agreement, so-named after the French capital where it was approved. It aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016, in time for COP 22, which has been under way since 7 November. “This momentum is irreversible – it is being driven not only by governments, but by science, business and global action of all types at all levels,” adds the Proclamation. “Our task now is to rapidly build on that momentum, together, moving forward purposefully to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to foster adaptation efforts, thereby benefiting and supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).” Negotiations between State-Parties concluded on Friday night. Governments set a rapid deadline of 2018 to complete the rule book for operationalizing the Paris Agreement to ensure confidence, cooperation and its success over the years and decades to come. Welcoming the outcome of the Conference, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted that all countries understand that climate action is essential for their security, economic prosperity and the health and well-being of their citizens. Global cooperation rooted in strong national action is essential, he noted, saying that no country, irrespective of its size or strength, is immune from the impacts of climate change, and no country can afford to tackle the climate challenge alone. In a statement issued by his spokesperson in New York, Mr. Ban applauded the bold leadership shown by many of the world's most vulnerable countries, many of whom are in Africa, to strengthen their ambition and to move as quickly as possible toward a one-hundred-percent clean energy, climate-resilient future. “As the global thermostat continues to rise, the Secretary-General renewed his call for all countries and all sectors of society to significantly increase their ambition and redouble their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” said the statement, adding that the UN chief also called on developed countries to deliver on their pledge to mobilize \$100 billion per year by 2020 in support of climate action by developing countries. The Marrakech Proclamation calls for “the highest political commitment to combat climate change” and calls for “strong solidarity with those countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change,” underscoring the need to support efforts aimed to enhance their adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability. State-Parties also call “for urgently raising ambition and strengthening cooperation amongst ourselves to close the gap between current emissions trajectories and the pathway needed to meet the long-term temperature goals of the Paris Agreement” and “for an increase in the volume, flow and access to finance for climate projects, alongside improved capacity and technology, including from developed to developing countries.” In the Marrakech Proclamation, developed country reaffirmed their \$100 billion mobilization goal per year by 2020 to support climate action by developing countries. All countries also called on all non-state actors to join them “for immediate and ambitious action and mobilization, building on their important achievements.” Alongside the negotiations, the two-week Marrakech Conference focused on various actions and initiatives taken by Governments and non-state actors to address climate change. On Thursday, the Conference

launched the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action Agenda to further scale up cooperative efforts in which businesses, sub-national and local governments and civil society team up with national governments to promote low-emission and resilient development. "We need everyone," the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Thursday, urging society-wide engagement in implementation of Paris climate accord.

MARRAKECH: 'We strive to lead,' climate-vulnerable countries declare, pledging robust action on Paris accord

18 November 2016 – At the United Nations Climate Conference under way in Marrakech, Morocco, known as 'COP 22,' more than 45 of the world's countries that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change pledged today to pursue robust action towards implementation of the landmark Paris Agreement. "We will survive and thrive," the countries said through the Marrakech Communiqué, a joint declaration by the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), the international partnership of countries that are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change. It aims to exert additional pressure for action to tackle the challenge. CVF members include countries from several regions of the world, from Maldives to Costa Rica, to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Tuvalu, Madagascar, and Nepal. They adopted their declaration as part of the work of the 22nd Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which has been meeting in Marrakech since Monday 7 November and wraps up today. The country's expressed solidarity with fellow member, Haiti, devastated by Hurricane Matthew, a humanitarian catastrophe amplified by capability constraints clearly overwhelming any capacity to adapt in a "now all-too familiar repetition of disaster." In the declaration, the CVF emphasized that any country with a nationally determined contribution (NDC) not yet compliant with its fair share consistent with the Paris Agreement's long-term goal "must update these contributions by 2020 at the latest." They pledged to green their economies as their contribution "towards achieving net carbon neutrality and 100 per cent renewable energy." They also expressed their commitment to develop and submit updated NDCs as early as possible before 2020, emphasizing that "additional enabling support on means of implementation from donors, especially capacity building, is indispensable to any upscaled mitigation and adaptation action by our countries." "We will plot a clear path to the future," added members of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, pledging to prepare long-term strategies before 2020 to attain maximal resilience. "We have all gathered here today to fight the good fight," said Dr. Gemedo Dale, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Ethiopia, who chaired a CVF meeting at COP 22 today. "Although our contribution [to climate change] is insignificant, the impact that [it] has brought on us is very high, and we are here together to make sure that we have a say in our future", he added. "We invite all CVF members to pursue robust domestic climate action." Welcoming the Communiqué from the Climate Vulnerable Forum, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon applauded "the initiative by many of the world's most vulnerable countries to lead by example and move towards a low-energy, clean-energy, climate-resilient future." "This is the type of bold leadership by example the world needs right now on climate change. If countries that have done the least to cause climate change can take such strong steps, so can others. We need action by all, on behalf of all," he added. The Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, Patricia Espinosa, stressed that the level of ambition and the vision expressed by the most vulnerable countries "is needed now more than ever." "We welcome this document adopted by the members of the Climate

Vulnerable Forum and we assure you of our support for the implementation of this vision," she emphasized.

European Union

PUBLIC HEALTH

Air quality: MEPs back new national caps on pollutants

Plans for more ambitious national caps on emissions of key pollutants by 2030, including NO_x, particulates and sulphur dioxide, won the support of MEPs on Wednesday. They had already been informally agreed with the Dutch Presidency of the Council. Air pollution causes about 400,000 premature deaths in the EU per year.

The new legislation sets out national emission reduction commitments for sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOC), ammonia (NH₃), and fine particulates (less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter). The proposed pollution cuts would reduce health impacts of air pollution by around 50% by 2030.

Car emissions

As advocated by MEPs, the text reiterates the EU commitment to identifying and responding to source control legislation that is failing to work, as demonstrated by the discrepancy between real-world emissions and NO_x test emissions from EURO 6 diesel cars.

Methane

Member states insisted on excluding methane from the scope of the directive. However, the EU Commission confirmed that it could trigger a review on this point.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Defence: MEPs push for more EU cooperation to better protect Europe

Terrorism, hybrid threats and cyber- and energy insecurity leave EU countries no choice but to step up their security and defence cooperation efforts, thus paving the way to a European Defence Union, say MEPs in a resolution passed on Tuesday. They

suggest devoting 2% of GDP to defence, establishing multinational forces and EU headquarters to plan and command crisis management operations, and enabling the EU to act where NATO is unwilling to do so.

The security situation in and around Europe has worsened significantly in recent years, due to challenges like terrorism, hybrid threats or cyber and energy insecurity, that no country is able to tackle alone, says a resolution on the European Defence Union "Solidarity and resilience require the EU to stand and act together," it says.

Pool military resources

MEPs want the EU to respond faster and more robustly to real threats, which, they say, demand that Europe's armed forces work together better. Duplication, overcapacity and barriers to defence procurement result currently in annual waste of €26.4 billion, they say. MEPs call on member states to pursue joint purchases of defence resources, and to pool share of non-lethal material such as transport vehicles or aircraft. They suggest introducing a "European Defence Semester, whereby member states would consult each other's planning and cycles and procurement plans" and advocate strengthening the European Defence Agency's coordination role. The resolution asks the European Council to lead the creation of "common Union defence policy and to provide additional financial resources ensuring its implementation." An EU headquarters should be set up to plan and command crisis management operations, say MEPs. EU member states should aim to spend 2% of GDP on defence and should establish "multinational forces within the Permanent Structured Cooperation and make these forces available to the common security and defence policy", they add.

EU support for defence research

MEPs back the proposed EU investment in defence-related research projects "of at least 90 million euro during next three years", suggesting that this should be followed up by a separate European Defence Research Programme with an annual budget of €500 million.

Full synergy with NATO

MEPs stress that the EU and NATO should cooperate more, particularly in the east and the south, to countering hybrid and cyber threats, improve maritime security and develop defence capabilities. However, the EU should also be prepared to act autonomously in cases where NATO is not willing to take the lead, MEPs add.

Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) review

The EU "should be able to intervene across the whole spectrum of crisis management, including crisis prevention and crisis resolution", while "all Council decisions on future missions and operations should prioritise engagements in conflicts directly affecting EU security", says the text.

The resolution suggests launching a CSDP training operation in Iraq to support member states involved in the coalition against Daesh. MEPs also urge the Council to set up a start-up fund for the initial phases of military operations.

Freeze EU accession talks with Turkey until it halts repression, urge MEPs

MEPs want a temporary freeze on EU accession talks with Turkey. In a resolution voted on Thursday, they say Turkey should nonetheless remain "anchored" to the EU. They also pledge to review their position when the "disproportionate repressive measures" under the state of emergency in Turkey are lifted.

"Turkey is an important partner of the EU", say MEPs. "But in partnerships, the will to cooperate has to be two-sided (...) Turkey is not showing this political will as the government's actions are further diverting Turkey from its European path", they add. A temporary halt of the negotiations would entail that no new negotiating chapters be opened and no new initiatives be taken in relation to Turkey's EU Negotiation Framework.

Capital punishment, a red line not to be crossed

The re-introduction of the capital punishment by the Turkish government would lead to a formal suspension of the accession process, say MEPs, pointing out that "the unequivocal rejection of the death penalty is an essential element of the Union acquis." MEPs strongly condemn the "disproportionate repressive measures" taken by the Turkish government since the failed coup attempt in July 2016. These "violate basic rights and freedoms protected by the Turkish Constitution" itself, they say.

PETITIONS

MEPs commend EU Ombudsman's inquiry into "revolving door" jobs for Commissioners

Tackling all sources of conflict of interest is crucial to ensure the credibility of political decision-making, say MEPs in a resolution on EU Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly's work in 2015, voted on Thursday. Parliament also reiterated its worries about former EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso's appointment as non-executive chairman of Goldman Sachs International, and called on the Ombudsman to initiate a strategic inquiry into the Commission's handling of this case.

Parliament's resolution welcomes the continuation of the European Ombudsman's investigations into Commission "revolving door" cases in which former senior EU officials take private sector jobs in their fields of expertise soon after leaving their posts, which may result in conflicts of interest. MEPs note in particular Mr Barroso's appointment last summer as non-executive chairman of the Goldman Sachs International investment bank, and call on the

Ombudsman to initiate a strategic inquiry into the Commission's handling of this case. But they also underline that the scope for conflicts of interest in policy making is much broader, and that particular attention needs to be paid to it when appointing candidates to positions in any EU institution.

Focus on transparency

As in recent years, transparency-related issues top the Ombudsman's list of 278 inquiries opened in 2015. Parliament praises her continued efforts to increase openness within the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) talks and three-way informal negotiations on legislation between the European Commission, Parliament and Council ("trilogues"). MEPs also call on the Ombudsman to push for more clarity and good administration within the European Central Bank, highlighting its importance as a member of the so called "Troika" (with the EU Commission and the IMF) and of Commission expert groups.

Protecting whistle-blowers

The resolution welcomes the fact that in 2015, all EU institutions introduced internal rules on whistleblowing. Parliament nonetheless again stresses the need for an EU directive on whistleblowing, containing minimum appropriate guarantees and legal safeguards for people revealing illegal or unethical activities in the public or private sectors.

Make lobbying more open

MEPs support the Ombudsman's work to make EU lobbying more open, and call on the Commission to make all information on lobby influence available free of charge and easily accessible to the public through an online database. They also welcome the Commission's recent proposal for a mandatory lobby register for all EU institutions, aimed at closing all loopholes concerning the activities of individuals and companies working on influencing EU decision-making.

ENVIRONMENT

MEPs call for ivory trade ban, penalties against wildlife trafficking

MEPs advocate a full and immediate EU-wide ban on ivory and rhinoceros horn trade, and call for common sanctions at EU level against wildlife trafficking, in a resolution voted on Thursday. Wildlife trafficking is worth an estimated €20 billion annually. It has grown in recent years, becoming one of the biggest and most profitable forms of organised cross-border crime.

MEPs call for a full and immediate ban at EU level on trade, export or re-export of ivory and rhinoceros horns. They also urge the EU member states to set appropriate levels of penalties for wildlife crime offences, and call on the Commission to work towards establishing common rules for defining criminal offences and sanctions relating to wildlife trafficking. The EU should also review existing legislation to ban any making available and placing on the market, transport, acquisition and possession of wildlife that has been illegally harvested or traded in third countries, MEPs say. Since trophy hunting has contributed to large-scale declines in certain species, MEPs urge the EU to establish a precautionary approach to dealing with imports of hunting trophies from species protected under the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations.

Financing militias and terrorist groups

MEPs note that wildlife crime is linked to other forms of organised crime, such as money laundering and the financing of militias and terrorist groups. They urge EU member states to use all relevant instruments, including cooperation with the financial sector, to reveal these links.

Global internet trade

MEPs call on EU leaders to engage with the operators of social media platforms, search engines and e-commerce platforms and step up checks to stop illegal internet trade in wildlife.

International Days

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

(17 October)

Secretary-General's message on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty:

We are approaching the end of the first year of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda is a universal vision for peace, prosperity and dignity for all people on a healthy planet. Achieving this objective is inconceivable without fulfilling the mandate of SDG 1 to end poverty in all its forms.

Today, some 1 billion people live in extreme poverty and more than 800 million endure hunger and malnutrition. But poverty is not simply measured by inadequate income. It is manifested in restricted access to health, education and other essential services and, too often, by the denial or abuse of other fundamental human rights.

Poverty is both a cause and consequence of marginalization and social exclusion. To fulfil the promise of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind, we must address the humiliation and exclusion of people living in poverty.

Humiliation and exclusion are powerful drivers of social unrest and, in extreme cases, the violent extremism that is troubling so many parts of our world. But, in most instances, people living in poverty respond to these societal ills with stoic resilience as they work to escape the degrading reality of their daily lives.

The duty of all Governments and societies is to address systemic socio-economic inequalities and facilitate the engagement of all people living in extreme poverty so they can help themselves, their families and their communities to build a more equitable, sustainable and prosperous future for all.

The message of today's observance is "Moving from Humiliation and Exclusion to Participation: Ending Poverty in All its Forms". We must break down the walls of poverty and exclusion that plague so many people in every region of the world. We must build inclusive societies that promote participation by all. We must ensure the voices of all those living in poverty are heard.

On this International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, let us listen to and heed the voices of people living in poverty. Let us commit to respect and defend the human rights of all people

and end the humiliation and social exclusion that people living in poverty face every day by promoting their involvement in global efforts to end extreme poverty once and for all.

United Nations Day

(24 October)

Secretary-General's message on United Nations Day

This year's observance of United Nations Day occurs at a time of transition for the world and for the United Nations.

Humanity has entered the era of sustainability – with a global commitment to fulfil the great promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this, the Organization's 71st year, we have 17 goals to propel us towards a better future for all on a healthy planet.

The world is also moving at long last beyond the mindset which viewed the burning of fossil fuels as the path to prosperity. At a time of record heat, Member States have embraced the Paris Agreement on climate change in record time. This landmark measure will enter into force on 4 November. Across that historic threshold lies our best chance for greener, cleaner, low-carbon growth.

The United Nations is also in transition, from its eighth Secretary-General to the ninth. I have been honoured to serve “we the peoples” for the past ten years. Together, we have put in place some solid foundations for shared progress – which we must build on by working even harder to empower women, engage youth and uphold human rights for all. But we have also suffered enormous heartbreak -- including unresolved conflicts causing immense suffering throughout the troubled Middle East, South Sudan, the Sahel and beyond. On these and other frontlines of violence and disaster, courageous UN staff continue to rise to the occasion and respond to the plight of the vulnerable. I thank people across the world for their support -- and urge all to give their full backing to Secretary-General-designate Antonio Guterres in continuing our global mission of peace, sustainable development and human rights.

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

(2 November)

Secretary-General's message on the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists:

Attacks on journalists violate the human rights of individuals and undermine freedom of information and expression across societies. Impunity, which makes this terrible situation worse, is rampant. Of the 827 documented killings of journalists over the past decade, the information at hand shows that only 8 percent of perpetrators were held to account.

I pay tribute to the courage of all media personnel who put their lives on the line for the sake of truth. And I call for immediate action to secure justice in cases where journalists were attacked, harassed or killed.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is mobilizing all partners to implement the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the

Issue of Impunity. Success hinges on cooperation to create a culture of freedom of expression, where those who restrict the work of journalists are sanctioned and all who attack them are punished.

Toward this end, I call on all countries to mark the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists with concrete actions to ensure that all media personnel are guaranteed the space they need to operate free from any form of harassment or intimidation. In this way, we will strengthen public access to information, which is key to the Sustainable Development Goals. Informed participation in decision-making by all advances sustainable development, building resilient, stable and just societies.

Commemorative activities will be held in a variety of places around the world, including Myanmar, which will officially mark the Day for the first time as part of its transition toward democracy with discussions at the Annual Media Development Conference. In the Russian Federation, UNESCO is teaming up with the Russian Union of Journalists to examine prevailing conditions, honour those who have lost their lives and raise awareness about ending impunity. In Pakistan, UNESCO is joining with officials in a discussion focused on strengthening the safety of journalists. In Tanzania, UNESCO is working with officials to hold a workshop commemorating the Day.

I urge all countries to observe this Day, especially where journalists are under threat. Let us resolve to do all we can to contribute to a safer environment for journalists and a freer society for all.

International Day for Preventing Exploitation of Environment in War and Armed Conflict

(6 November)

Secretary-General's message on International Day for Preventing Exploitation of Environment in War and Armed Conflict:

This year, the world began implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With 17 universal and interdependent Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda is a transformational blueprint for peace, prosperity and dignity for all on a healthy planet. To achieve this vision, we must recognize that we have a duty of care towards the environment in peacetime and during war.

Poor governance of the environment and natural resources can contribute to the outbreak of conflict. It can fuel and finance existing conflicts and it can increase the risk of relapse. Conversely, there are many examples of natural resources serving as catalysts for peaceful cooperation, confidence-building and poverty reduction.

In the aftermath of violent conflict, natural resources, such as land, timber, minerals, oil and gas, are often the primary assets that governments need to support livelihoods and economic recovery. How governments manage these resources can fundamentally alter the course of post-conflict peacebuilding. That is why it is so important that we work together to combat environmental crime, end the illegal exploitation of natural resources, improve transparency, share benefits more equitably and encourage the participation of women, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups in decision-making.

The 2030 Agenda explicitly recognizes that “sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development.” That is why, earlier this year, all 193 Member States of the United Nations Environment Assembly adopted a resolution committing to protect the environment in areas affected by armed conflict. At the same time, the United Nations International Law Commission is currently reviewing the international legal framework for protecting the environment before, during and after armed conflict. It aims to establish guidelines that can better support environmental preservation, particularly in protected areas and environmentally sensitive sites, such as drinking water aquifers, which are of critical environmental and cultural importance and can be severely affected by warfare.

With the 2030 Agenda and the concurrent efforts of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the International Law Commission, we have a range of important tools at our disposal. On this International Day, I urge governments, businesses and citizens around the world to prioritize environmental care and the sustainable management of natural resources for preventing conflict, building peace and promoting lasting prosperity.

Secretary-General's message on World Diabetes Day

(14 November)

Secretary-General's message on World Diabetes Day:

Diabetes is a leading cause of poor eyesight and blindness worldwide. Because the changes are painless and gradual, people often only realize they have a problem when their eyesight finally begins to fail. At that point, it can be too late to improve or restore vision.

It is therefore vital that all people with diabetes have their eyes examined regularly by trained personnel who know what to look for and who can provide advice and treatment. If people can control blood glucose levels and blood pressure, they can reduce the risk of changes in blood vessels. And even when changes do occur, it is possible to slow down the process with timely treatment.

Each year, diabetes becomes more common, mainly due to aging populations and the rise of obesity. Its prevalence has nearly doubled in the past 35 years, with the increase greatest in low- and middle-income countries.

Some 422 million people now live with diabetes. The disease shortens lives and, if not managed, can cause severe complications such as amputations, strokes or kidney failure. It has devastating impacts on household budgets and national economies.

On this international day, let us keep our “Eyes on Diabetes”. Let us focus both on prevention and strengthening health services so that everyone who has this debilitating disease can receive the support he or she needs.

Secretary-General's message on the International Day of Tolerance

(16 November 2016)

Secretary-General's message on the International Day of Tolerance:

The values of tolerance and mutual understanding – so firmly embedded in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – are facing profound tests around the world. Refugees and migrants continue to face closed doors and clenched fists. Violent extremists continue to target people solely because of their faiths and traditions. Day by day, bigotry shows its face through racism, anti-Muslim hatred, anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination. Too many armed conflicts have sectarian dimensions; too many societal disputes break down along communal lines. And too many politicians use the cynical math that says you add votes by dividing people. The United Nations promotes tolerance as a matter of its fundamental identity. When tolerance is upheld, we encourage the world to emulate those fine examples. When tolerance is threatened, we must speak out. The United Nations has launched a new campaign to promote tolerance, respect and dignity across the world. We call it, simply, "Together". It is meant as a specific response to the xenophobia faced by so many refugees and migrants, and aims to highlight the benefits of diversity and migration. But it is also part of our general efforts to promote mutual understanding and global harmony. Let us not be provoked or play into the hands of those who thrive on hatred and instil fear in our societies. Today's global challenges should compel us to reject the failed mindset of "us" versus "them". Let us see the world and all its possibilities through the prism of "we the peoples".

Secretary-General's message for the International Day to End Violence Against Women and Girls

(25 November)

Secretary-General's message for the International Day to End Violence Against Women and Girls:

At long last, there is growing global recognition that violence against women and girls is a human rights violation, public health pandemic and serious obstacle to sustainable development. Yet there is still much more we can and must do to turn this awareness into meaningful prevention and response. Violence against women and girls imposes large-scale costs on families, communities and economies. When women cannot work as a result of violence, their employment may be put at risk, jeopardizing much-needed income, autonomy and their ability to leave abusive relationships. Violence against women also results in lost productivity for businesses, and drains resources from social services, the justice system and health-care agencies. Domestic and intimate partner violence remains widespread, compounded by impunity for those crimes. The net result is enormous suffering as well as the exclusion of women from playing their full and rightful roles in society. The world cannot afford to pay this price. Women and girls cannot afford it – and should not have to. Yet such violence persists every day, around the world. And efforts to address this challenge, although rich in political commitment, are chronically under-funded. Since 2008, I have led the UNiTE campaign to End Violence against Women, which calls for global action to increase resources and promote solutions. I call on governments to show their commitment by dramatically increasing national spending in all relevant areas, including in support of women's movements and civil society organizations. I also encourage world leaders to contribute to UN Women and to the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. We look as well to the private sector, philanthropies and concerned citizens to do their part. Today, we are seeing the world lit up in orange, symbolizing a bright future for women and girls. With dedicated investment, we

can keep these lights shining, uphold human rights and eliminate violence against women and girls for good.

Secretary-General's message on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

(29 November)

Secretary-General's message on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not just one of many conflicts in the region. It is in many ways a long-standing, gaping wound that has fed tension and conflict throughout the Middle East. Israeli and Palestinian leaders still voice their support for the two-State solution. However, without urgent steps to revive a political perspective, they risk entrenching a one-state reality. Recent years have witnessed two unsuccessful attempts at negotiating a peaceful settlement, three armed conflicts, thousands of dead – the vast majority of them Palestinian civilians – rampant incitement, terror attacks, thousands of rockets and bombs fired at Israel from Gaza, and an expanding, illegal Israeli settlement enterprise that risks undermining Israel's democratic values and the character of its society. This year, the number of demolitions of Palestinian houses and other structures by Israeli forces has doubled, compared to 2015. Gaza remains a humanitarian emergency, with 2 million Palestinians struggling with crumbling infrastructure and a paralyzed economy, and tens of thousands still displaced, awaiting reconstruction of homes destroyed by conflict.

All this has led to growing anger and frustration among Palestinians and profound disillusionment among Israelis. It has strengthened radicals and weakened moderates on both sides. Making matters worse is a dangerous vacuum within the international community as crises elsewhere claim the attention of world leaders. The internal divisions and in-fighting in the West Bank add a new worrying dimension to the paralyzing lack of Palestinian unity, and undermine democracy and the rule of law. With the Israeli occupation approaching its 50th year, and the prospects for a two-State solution threatening to slip out of reach, the international community must make it clear that it remains committed to helping the parties to rebuild trust and create the conditions for meaningful negotiations.

The steps required to create conditions for successful negotiations have been spelled out in the recent report of the Middle East Quartet. The United Nations, as well as our partners in the Quartet -- the European Union, Russian Federation and the United States -- remain committed to working with key stakeholders, including countries in the region, to implement the report's recommendations. On this International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, let us all reaffirm our commitment to upholding the rights of the Palestinian people and working to build a future of peace, justice, security and dignity for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

Unipax

Global revolution

Multimedia Project to set up a New Humanism

The Author of this project is Orazio Parisotto (Past President and Founder member of UNIPAX), thanks also to the essential contribute of the Master Silvio Amelio, weighty sculptor and humanist responsible of the "Artists for the Peace" Department of the Unipax and also its Ambassador at UN.

Orazio Parisotto and Silvio Amelio launch an important social-cultural and ethical initiative, with the cooperation of the UNIPAX, that involves more than 100.000 associations, institutions, famous bloggers and opinion leaders from all the Countries.

This social-cultural initiative draws attention to the problems and the emergencies of the humanity, also thanks to the young people, worried about their future, who ideally address their requests to the Head of Government of all world.

The main work of this project consists in a interactive book named "The Global Revolution for a New Humanism".

The book is also available in e-book size. Unipax backs the promotion of the book, through the collection of the adhesions, sharing and participations to the proposals and initiatives launched towards the Book. The aim of the book is to provide incentives in order that a peaceful revolution (Gandhi style) could be launched through a general project that prefigures a "New Democratic Institutional Architecture", a "New International Ethical Economy" and a "Worldwide Regulation for the Civil Cohabitation" at the international level, specifying the "Ways Out" from the global crisis.

The general project aims to involve about 100.000 NGO and other organisms committed in the safeguard of the human rights and of the peace at international level, the project will be presented to the Head of the Government with a maxi petition (developed in 10 points).

The aim of the maxi petition is to ask concrete answers to cope with the problems that trouble the humanity and in particular the problems connected with the environmental safeguard, the social justice, the crazy arms race, the dangers produced by the use of the new technologies, the promotion of the culture.

The achievement of the "Artistic Cultural Current of the New Humanism" is part integrant of this project. The artists, the men of culture and the leaders of the associations of the social utility (that with their commitment are already contributing, as peacemakers, for change) will arrange this Document. Together with the young people, they can define a "Artistic cultural

Decalogue of the New Humanism" that if properly widespread may launch the creative imagination of the men of good will from all over the World and from every culture.

It's a multimedia global project which aims to provide to the citizens and specially to the young people, the "ways out" from the current difficulties and new hopes for a better future demanding also their direct cooperation.

The entire project will be promoted with a multimedia advertisement during 3 minutes and will be backed by a Documentary-movie during about 30 minutes.

All will be carried out in two languages (Italian and English).