



## Antarctic fragility a reminder of importance of success in Copenhagen – Ban



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in Antarctica in November 2007  
to see first-hand the effects of climate change on the melting glaciers

1 December 2009 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today urged action on two fronts ahead of next week’s United Nations climate change conference in Copenhagen as he marked the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty and commended European ministers for their work with the UN.

In a video **address**, the Secretary-General said that international cooperation in and for Antarctica provides an example for all. The Antarctic Treaty, signed by 47 countries, set aside the continent as a scientific preserve, established freedom of scientific investigation and banned military activity.

“I urge you to do your part to ensure that this month’s conference in Copenhagen lays the foundation for a legally binding climate treaty,” said the Secretary-General.

“Commercial activities, in particular unsustainable fishing, adverse impacts of tourism and biological prospecting, could jeopardize the integrity of the fragile Antarctic ecosystem. But the greatest threat is climate change,” he added.

Meanwhile, at the ministerial council meeting of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Athens, the Secretary-General called the bloc “an invaluable partner of the United Nations” and urged ministers to do their part to make Copenhagen a success.

“I look forward to new initiatives emanating from the long-standing cooperation among the OSCE, the UN Environmental Programme, the UN Development Programme and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (**UNECE**), under the umbrella of the Environment and Security Initiative.”

In a **statement** delivered on his behalf by Ján Kubiš, Executive Secretary of UNECE, the Secretary-General added that the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia works with the OSCE to tackle climate change and manage shared resources, such as water.

“The relationship between the OSCE and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe has continued to be exemplary. By joining forces to promote cross-border economic and environmental cooperation, the two are addressing a variety of socio-economic drivers of potential conflict,” the statement read.

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