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## Secretary-General calls for European action as climate talks restart in Bonn



Climate change talks underway in Bonn, Germany

9 April 2010 – The first session of formal United Nations climate change negotiations since last December’s global gathering in Copenhagen started in Bonn, Germany, today with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urging European leaders to turn their promises into law and to find ways to avoid potentially dangerous international disputes over natural resources.

**Addressing** the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Vienna yesterday, the Secretary-General called for turning “commitments of the Copenhagen Accord into a legally binding climate change treaty.”

The Copenhagen Accord – which 75 countries have now signed – was the final document from December 2009’s UN Climate Change Conference (UNCCC) in Denmark, where progress to agree on a binding treaty faltered.

The current session in Bonn is designed to be a working session ahead of a high-level ministerial meeting in Cancun, Mexico, that is slated to begin on 29 November.

Climate change is one of the Secretary-General’s top priorities. Recalling his recent visit to Uzbekistan, where he visited the Aral Sea – “where once there was water, sea, I saw endless sand and a graveyard of ships” – Mr. Ban told the OSCE that the region’s management of natural resources was potentially dangerous.

“As waters recede, tensions will rise,” he said. “We need to work together, with full political engagement, to bring the various parties to the negotiating table, before tensions grow worse.”

“If ever there were an opportunity for the UN and the OSCE to partner in managing a potentially dangerous security situation, this is it,” he added.

The UN has established a regional centre for preventive diplomacy (known as UNRCCA), in cooperation with the OSCE, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), to assist Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The organizations are also participating in the Environmental Security Initiative, which was designed to allow UN agencies and regional European bodies to pool their resources and expertise to address the links between the natural environment and human security.

In addition to the environment, Mr. Ban focused yesterday’s address on the situation in Kyrgyzstan, and on disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

During his visit to Central Asia, Mr. Ban visited a former Soviet nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan.

Noting the signing of a successor agreement to the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START), he said the world can look forward to next week’s nuclear security summit in Washington “with heightened optimism and fresh political will.”

He also called for progress on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and for cooperation on an arms trade treaty which is to be negotiated this summer in New York.

“We must not lose sight of the need for action on conventional weapons. The runaway trade in arms is a plague on humankind,” Mr. Ban said.

“I urge all of you to make the most of this opportunity to work toward a strong and robust treaty,” he added.

In a related development, Mr. Ban chaired a session today of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), which brings together on a regular basis the heads of the UN system – the 15 specialized agencies, 10 UN funds and programmes, the International Atomic Energy Agency ([IAEA](#)) and the World Trade Organization ([WTO](#)) – to review political issues and major concerns facing the UN.

The Secretary-General is scheduled to return to New York this weekend.

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