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Geneva, 31 August - 4 September 2009

High Level Segment

Statement by

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on behalf of the European Union

Geneva, 3 September 2009

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Statement on behalf of the European Union

by Åsa-Britt Karlsson, State Secretary

Ministry of the Environment, Sweden

at the Third World Climate Conference,

Geneva, 31 August - 4 September 2009

Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*¹, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

The third World Climate Conference is a very timely event with great significance to the efforts on managing climate variability and climate change on our planet. Climate change affects us all. Our ability to cope with climate change and climate variability depends to a large degree on the provision of detailed, accurate, relevant and easily accessible information on climate change. But the relevant science, policy and practice are often complex and challenging. Nevertheless, the European Union is resolute in its will to face the challenges and make its contribution - together with and as a part of the international community.

We expect that the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, COP 15, on a new deal on climate change in Copenhagen in December this year will establish the necessary principles and commitments by countries for an effective global response to climate change. Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change will be at the core of the negotiations. However, even under the best outcome the world will still face the challenge of adverse effects of global climate change. The poorest and most vulnerable nations will be particularly exposed and will need considerable support to cope with the adverse impacts of climate change.

Both mitigation and adaptation have distinct regional, national and local dimensions. At different levels all of us need to consider how to integrate adaptation into all relevant aspects of everyday endeavors as well as in national development plans. Within the European Union we have started to debate these issues as outlined in the European Commission's White Paper on Adaptation. This includes both the EU and neighboring countries, particularly the most vulnerable developing countries.

We are very happy that the third World Climate Conference has succeeded in addressing the importance of adaptation and effectively responded to the requirements for access to a

¹ * Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

variety of different data and information needed for adaptation to climate change and climate variability. This is true for climate research, modeling, prediction, observation and monitoring. These efforts are paramount for decisions about the fundamental well-being of people and some cases even about the survival of societies. They are also important in enhancing mitigation efforts. As has quite rightly been recognized at this Conference, we need to improve and make more effective the delivery of available as well as new information as it emerges. The information relies on the underlying science and service provision, but in particular, it needs to be driven by user needs. But we also need a better coordination between those agencies involved in supplying and disseminating information on climate change and response measures and that provide assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable countries. The Global Framework for Climate Services, that we are just about to decide to develop (that we have just decided to develop) , will play an important role in this respect. In developing the framework we also need to ensure that the necessary information is available at all levels of society and among all actors and stakeholders, including women. We should not forget the need for capacity building to make the dissemination and use of information effective.

The upcoming COP15 in Copenhagen is now only three months away. The third World Climate Conference has demonstrated the tangible aspects of the impacts of climate variability and change. It has also reminded us of the importance of international community collaboration on evaluating the threat and designing and adopting effective responses to the challenges of climate change. The EU is happy to see that this conference has managed to agree on actions of great relevance to the COP15 in Copenhagen. The UNFCCC will benefit tremendously from the provision of relevant data and information on climate change as adaptation is playing a major role in a Copenhagen agreement. Timely, adequate, accurate and accessible information is of prime concern in all efforts to cope with adaptation to climate change. What this conference has produced will have a lasting significance for combating climate change.

To close, the European Union would like to extend its great appreciation to the WMO, ICSU, UNEP and other partner organizations for the organization of third World Climate Conference. Thank You!