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MEDIA ALERT

UNFCCC Executive Secretary reaction to the Climate Action Plan of US President Barack Obama

(Bonn, 25 June 2013) – Reacting to the Climate Action Plan of US President Barack Obama published today, UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres, the UN’s top climate change official, said:

“President Obama's climate action plan is a necessary next step to meet an immediate, worrying shortfall in action to deal with climate change and can be a critical move forward on the path towards a new, global climate agreement. It remains vital that the United States as the world's largest developed economy is seen to be leading serious action to deal with climate change, both at home and abroad. These new steps will help to meet those goals, if they are implemented to the fullest extent to which they are intended.

“It is significant that the new plan aims to start up rapidly and covers the full menu of solutions to climate change: clean energy, renewable energy, energy efficiency and the many actions that all countries need to take to adapt to accelerating climate change. This climate action plan should be positive for the US economy and the economies of other countries, as the US shifts faster towards a sustainable, low carbon model, including addressing directly the heaviest sources of emissions from unmodified coal and gas plants.

“When the United States leads action, it also encourages more rapid international efforts to combat climate change by strengthening political trust, building business momentum and driving new technology solutions. We are fast approaching 2015, the year in which governments of the world have committed to agree an ambitious policy framework to curb greenhouse gas emissions and better enable the poorest and most vulnerable nations to adapt to climate change. This new agreement will enter into force from 2020 and must be unambiguous in providing the crystal clear signals and international mechanisms that will accelerate the domestic policy and business investment decisions required to keep the world below a maximum 2 degrees Celsius average temperature rise. To get there, we need immediately stepped up action on the part of government at all levels and by business.

“I applaud the fact that the US intends to play a leading role by helping to forge a truly global solution to climate change that galvanizes international action to significantly reduce emissions, prepares for climate impacts, and drives progress through the international negotiations. This US climate action plan must also be leveraged into fresh, high-level political consensus among countries that will smooth the way for faster progress in the international climate change negotiations under the United Nations.”



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About the UNFCCC

With 195 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 192 of the UNFCCC Parties. For the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, 37 States, consisting of highly industrialized countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

See also: <<http://unfccc.int/press/items/2794.php>>

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