



United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification



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Decision makers Discussed Options for the Implementation of the UNCCD Strategy

Bonn, Germany, 27 May 2008 – The UNCCD Secretariat in cooperation with the Government of Germany organized the High-level Policy Dialogue on the theme “Coping with Today's Global Challenges in the Context of the Strategy of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification”, under the chairmanship of Her Excellency Mrs. Karin Kortmann, Parliamentary State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany.

Over 100 Ministers, Ambassadors and head of delegations from around various regions as well as representatives of United Nations Organizations, non-governmental organizations and private sector met to identify conditions required and political commitment necessary for the implementation of the Ten-Strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention in the context of current global emerging issues.

“Climate change, the lost of biodiversity and desertification are challenges closely interlinked” said Mr. Josep Puxeu Secretary of State for Water and the Rural Environment of Spain and President of the UNCCD COP Bureau, during the opening session. “We need to be aware that they represent extraordinary challenges to the human rights, poverty, inequality, famine and the despair that forces millions of people to leave their own habitats and cultures”

High-ranking officials that attended the event exchanged views on responses to various emerging challenges as they relate to the UNCCD Strategy. These include the linkages between desertification/ land degradation and the adaptation – mitigation to climate change; the need for robust investments in sustainable land management in the drylands; the need to promote knowledge management, Science and Technology for an enhanced implementation of the UNCCD.

“The protection of land and soil is key to address the main factor leading to forced migrations” stated Mr. Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD “It reduces the occurrence of conflicts caused by environmental degradation and alleviates the impact of natural disasters”

The outputs of the deliberations of the High-level Policy Dialogue will be submitted to Parties for consideration at the forthcoming seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, to take place in Istanbul, Turkey, from the 3rd to the 14th of November 2008.

“In my view the HLPD provided a unique opportunity to highlight the importance of the UNCCD for global environment and the achievement of development goals” concluded Ms. Kortmann. “The UNCCD is the Convention that integrates combating the causes and impacts of climate change, drought, land degradation and the loss of biodiversity”

Note to journalists

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(Standard clause)

Developed as a result of the Rio Summit, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is a unique instrument that has brought attention to land degradation to some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and people in the world. Twelve years after coming into force, the UNCCD benefits from the largest membership of the three Rio Conventions and is increasingly recognized as an instrument, which can make an important contribution to the achievement of sustainable development and poverty reduction.