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INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

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MATTERS RELATED TO UNFCCC AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES

Letter from the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC

(Submitted by the IPCC Secretariat)

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FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE - Secretariat
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Executive Secretary
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Date: 18 April 2011
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Dear Ms. Christ,

I thank you for taking the initiative to discuss and exchange views with us on possible ways for further advancing the cooperation between our processes. Our meeting on the margins of the Climate Change Talks in Bangkok provided a very useful and productive opportunity to share information and perspectives and to explore concrete ideas on this matter.

In this regard, I hope that IPCC representatives would be available to inform our negotiators on the key finding of the new IPCC Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation (SRREN) at the session of the subsidiary bodies to be held from 6–17 June 2011 in Bonn, Germany. This report could provide the SBSTA with a comprehensive assessment of renewable energy and related policy and financial instruments, and could inform its deliberations under the agenda item on scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of mitigation.

The IPCC could present the key findings of the SRREN in a statement to the SBSTA. As discussed, we will also organize a joint SBSTA-IPCC side event, tentatively scheduled for Tuesday 7 June 2011, which will allow for detailed presentations on the report followed by discussions. The SBSTA conclusions under this agenda item may then recognize the report and may provide further guidance on follow up activities, as appropriate.

I would like to take this opportunity to bring to the attention of the Panel, through you, that we received a mandate in Cancun to conduct a periodical review of the adequacy of the long-term global goal to maintain the global warming under 2 degrees Celsius, in the light of the ultimate objective of the Convention, and the overall progress towards achieving it.

The first review, which should start in 2013 and should be concluded by 2015, should be guided by the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and take into account, inter alia, the best available knowledge, including the assessment reports of the IPCC.



Although the discussions on the review are still to be initiated, and without prejudging how Parties will conduct this review, in my view, it will have an important role in strengthening cooperative actions to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

I am aware that Article 2 of the Convention will be considered as a cross-cutting theme in the fifth assessment report of the IPCC and that the reports of all working groups will include relevant information for the review. Working Group I (WG 1) will consider abrupt and irreversible changes, including commitments to change, and projected changes in mean climate variables, such as temperature and precipitation, for a range of different scenarios. This information will be essential for the assessment of risk by WGs II and III. WG II contribution will consider: the meanings of “prevent”; “dangerous anthropogenic interference”; ability of “ecosystems to adapt naturally”; “food production is not threatened”; and “enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner”. Furthermore, WG III will explore the scope of options leading to various warming levels (e.g. 1.5°C, 2°C, 3°C) and the costs, benefits and risks of different mitigation options. It will also examine the unintended consequences of policies, in particular of second-best policies.

All this information will be very useful for the review, but in order to be effective and to allow the review to be conducted in a timely manner for supporting the consideration of its outcomes and for a possible action by the COP at the end of 2015, it should be available as early as possible. In this context, I would like to kindly request the Panel to consider finalizing all the products of the fifth assessment report, including the synthesis report, by June 2014.

I know this request would mean a significant rescheduling of the current plan for finalizing the reports of the WGs and of the synthesis report but I hope the Panel will agree with me and will understand the important role the fifth assessment report plays in supporting the first review of the adequacy of the long-term global goal to maintain global warming under 2 degrees Celsius.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to underline that, in all our endeavors on this topic, we hope to enjoy excellent cooperation with the IPCC and its Secretariat. I look forward to continuing our fullest cooperation on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Christiana Figueres