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**Statement by State Secretary Joakim Stymne in the EU Presidency Conference “Environment, Climate Change and Security – Facing the Challenges”, Stockholm, 15 October 2009.**

Dear Conference Participants, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here today. I would like to start by warmly thanking the speakers, FOI, Sida and the other agencies involved in organizing this important event.

Today’s Conference has brought together eminent experts from different sectors to explore the multi-dimensional impacts of climate change on our collective security. The purpose has been to build understanding and awareness on an issue that is rapidly becoming a reality for many of us. Through our discussions we have bridged the gap between scientific analysis and political reality.

Given the depth of the discussions here today I will not try to summarize them. There are however three recurrent themes from today that I would particularly like to pick up on.

First, the IMPACTS are universal. Climate change is a global challenge. Left unchecked it will sooner or later affect us all. Rich or poor. North or South. As the examples by the Netherlands and Bangladesh earlier today underline, this is not a challenge only to some, but a concern to us all.

Second, our RESPONSE must be global. Since climate change brings shared challenges we need to respond with a comprehensive approach: at all levels and with all policy tools at our disposal. No country can tackle these issues in isolation.

Third, we need urgent ACTION. The security risks posed by climate change are real. They are already being felt. They are impacting on people's lives. We have heard several stark examples of the consequences of inaction. I would like to claim we all have a moral imperative to take action. And one key measure along the way is a constructive process leading up to Copenhagen - and a bold agreement at COP15.

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Before moving on to what needs to be done I would like to talk a little more about the consequences of climate related insecurity.

Today's Conference has provided us with strong illustrations about the challenges we are facing. By redrawing the maps

of water availability, food security, disease prevalence, population distribution and coastal zones, climate change will have serious implications for the security and development of entire regions.

We need to build emergency preparedness capacity for both the immediate and longer term, as well as be prepared to address a number of unprecedented -and unpredicted- challenges. Work for disaster risk reduction and The Hyogo Framework for Action gives us an important platform in building resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is not news to anyone in this room that it is the poor and vulnerable that are most at risk. One third of Africans live in areas prone to drought. By 2020 an additional 75 to 250 million Africans are likely to be at risk from water stress. Sea-level rise, coastal flooding, changing rainfall patterns and drought could displace as many as 200 million people in Africa in 2050. Scientists draw the conclusion that climate change threatens to exacerbate this trends and undermine governments' ability to ensure security and sustainable development. Climate change is a threat multiplier in an already fragile region.

For people of the Pacific Small Island Developing States the link between climate change, development and security is

not only a question of regional stability, it is also about sovereignty. Due to sea level rise, and the inability to support their populations that follows, the governments must now formulate relocation strategies and provide opportunities for their citizens to migrate. The international community will have to tackle the legal and political implications of migration caused by climate related events and stateless citizens within a not so distant future.

In the Arctic region, the effects of climate change are plainly visible with melting sea ice, melting of the Greenland ice cap and thawing permafrost. Coastal erosion has already made it necessary to relocate entire communities. Fortunately in this region, we have international cooperation structures in place that bring together the states and the indigenous peoples involved. Such cooperation fosters confidence and helps to address transboundary issues, adapt to new conditions, maintain stability and avoid conflicts.

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So how can we continue our efforts to address these challenges? I'd like to set out six areas in particular where action is needed.

First, we need to focus our efforts. The UN Secretary-General's landmark report on the implications of climate change on security, proposes two courses of action. One is

to prioritize problem areas with high impact, large magnitudes, imminent threats, irreversible consequences and high human costs. The other is to accelerate the identification of so called “threat minimizers”. This is about creating positive spirals of change and use the same tools in the toolbox to multiply the effects.

Second, we need to identify and strengthen the inter-linkages. Between climate change and security, between climate change and development and also between adaptation and mitigation. To me, adaptation is about forms of development in which the capacity to manage risk determines progress. It is important to remember the synergies between adaptation measures and cutting emissions. Investment in mitigation and adaptation should go hand in hand with efforts to address and respond to the international security threats posed by climate change. These actions should all be viewed as part of a preventive security policy.

As a third measure, we need to do our utmost to limit the impacts of climate change. We must take bold and determined action to reduce our collective emissions of greenhouse gases. The 2 degree target is not an imperative, it’s a necessity. Developed countries will have to continue to take the lead – but developing countries, especially the advanced emerging economies will also have to contribute with intensified actions.

Forth, adaptation to climate change is a challenge for every country. Special attention must be paid to the most vulnerable groups, women and children, indigenous people and the poor. It is crucial to strengthen the ability of individuals, ecosystems and societies to deal with this challenge. The efforts of Under Secretary General Janneh and the African Climate Change Policy Center (ACPC) to provide a framework for ensuring coherent adaptation measures serves an important function in this regard. Adaptation in the agricultural sector will be decisive for food security and the livelihood of poor people. A growing body of scientific work also shows the importance of applying a gender perspective on adaptation. Promotion of good governance, human rights and gender equality are “threat minimizers”. They are desirable in their own right but can also help lower the risk of climate related insecurity. We need to promote more systematic utilization of these win-win opportunities to ensure that regional and multinational adaptation activities have trust creating and peacebuilding effects.

As a fifth point on my list, we need to foster the political will to create real change. Earlier today you heard Mr. Johan Schaar talking about the work of the Commission on Climate Change and Development. The report presented in May this year by the Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation, Gunilla Carlsson, underlines the

*human dimension* of climate change. It is private individuals and households, villages and municipalities that have to deal with and adapt to the changes.

One of the Commission's proposals was the establishment of a High Level Panel, with the aim to articulate a vision for development that achieves the multiple goals of mitigation, adaptation and meeting human needs. (Such a Panel would propose key steps to tackle the common roots of current crises). The Secretary-General has welcomed this proposal and the Swedish government is keen to support its work.

And last but not least, because the agenda is so pervasive, a multilateral response is merited. Our discussions today has underlined that CCIS should be on the international community's agenda. All international and regional organizations should contribute to this aim – within their respective mandates: the OSCE, NATO, the Arctic Council, the AU, OAS, ASEAN among others. The EU has long been at the forefront of efforts of moving this issue up on the international agenda, and has a continued responsibility for bringing it forward and, not least, to contribute to the search for solutions. And yet, in this effort the EU is just a part of the global system. The United Nations must take the lead.

The report of the Secretary-General will be introduced to the General Assembly in mid-November. It is the first of its kind

and has the potential to serve as a vital point of departure for the work on CCIS. With it, the international community has recognized the daunting problem and given it the prominent position it deserves. It is important that we continue to build knowledge and discuss solutions jointly, on a global level. A joint ownership is a prerequisite for creating the transparency and confidence needed to adequately address the issue and its challenges. Climate change and security is an item that should therefore be kept regularly on the agenda of the UN General Assembly, underpinned by recurrent reports of the Secretary General. From an EU point of view, we also believe that CCIS should be considered by the UN Security Council.

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Underpinning these six areas is the need to reach an ambitious agreement in Copenhagen. A bold outcome is in the interest – and is the responsibility – of every nation. I hope that the discussions here today will be one more step towards reaching that momentum.

I like to end this Conference by quoting the President of Kiribati, H. E. Anote Tong. In his address to the General Assembly earlier this fall President Tong said: "Climate change is indeed the greatest moral challenge of our time. I fear that our children and grandchildren will look back and ask, 'How is it that they knew what they knew, and yet did

so little””. These are words that should remain in our minds as we head for Copenhagen.

Thank you. (end)