

11 February 2008

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Srgjan Kerim,
President of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the Panels “Addressing Climate Change: The United
nations and the World at Work”**

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

First of all, I would also like to thank personally the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon and the Mayor of New York, Michael Bloomberg for their leadership on these issues and for taking part in the opening session of the debate.

May I also commend H.E President Turk of Slovenia and the former Governor of New York, George Pataki, for their insightful and inspirational remarks at a dinner I hosted last night for the Panellist and Special Guests taking part in today's debate.

In addition, I owe a special thanks to Sir Richard Branson and his team for coming to the United Nations. We need more captains of industry like Sir Richard, who are willing to get involved and contribute their time, energy and resources to make a difference – not only on climate change but also on the health MDGs in Africa.

I would also like to sincerely thank Darryl Hannah. She is passionate about securing our environment for future generations, and has demonstrated through her own practical actions and personal values that we can all make a difference. In fact, that we all have an obligation to make a difference through our everyday behaviour.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

May I also thank Yvo de Boer, the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, for summarising the first day of our thematic debate, ‘Addressing climate change: the United Nations and the world at work’.

Today, there has been an urgency about the way we have all engaged in the debate that that we don't generally witness in the General Assembly. Our discussions, in the Trusteeship Council and in the margins of this meeting, have been truly engaging, inclusive and focused on results.

This could not have happened without the close cooperation and support of all Member States.

This is because, as Mayor Bloomberg mentioned, we all now recognise that we face an emergency.

We face an issue that transcends borders, institutions and economic classes. It is too late to say that we will deal with it later!

But more than that, today, has also demonstrated that there is hope. There is a growing confidence among all stakeholders that we can deliver practical action to address the climate issue, in particular by expanding our partnerships and agreeing a global strategy.

Excellencies,

Finally, I would like to thank our moderators, Ricardo Lagos, Secretary-General's Climate Change Envoy, and Timothy Wirth President of the United Nations Foundation; and, all the Panellists and Special Guests for enriching our collective understanding and for their active contribution to developing a sustainable solution to climate change.

Tomorrow, we will continue in the General Assembly Hall. I look forward to what Member States will have to say about the different strategies to move forward in partnership that we have discussed today.

Thank you very much for your attention.