



Press Release

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Climate Vulnerable Forum: Hardest Hit by Climate Change Seek to Amplify Pressure at Bangladesh Ministerial

- Ministers and representatives of some 30 countries, among the most vulnerable to the harmful effects of climate change, to gather in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 13th and 14th November 2011, just ahead of UN climate talks in Durban (COP17)
- Vulnerable countries seeking heightened awareness, accountability and support in the face of real and growing damages and suffering caused by climate change
- Forum of most vulnerable seeks leadership on green development, and assistance in technology, capacity and finance to adapt and pursue low-carbon growth

MADRID – 19 October 2011: The government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, supported by DARA¹, is convening a unique global conference of countries worst affected by the growing climate crisis. The ministerial-level meeting of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) will see high representatives from vulnerable countries of Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific gather in the Bangladesh capital of Dhaka. Delegates are expected to issue a declaration firming united political calls from vulnerable countries for action by industrialized nations and urgent support to limit increasing loss of human life and other damages. They are also expected to affirm their own determination to pursue green development and to manifest moral leadership on low-carbon development.

DARA Trustee and Former President of Costa Rica, Mr. José María Figueres said:

“The CVF first spoke out in 2009, just prior to the UN climate conference at Copenhagen, when its leaders confronted us with one voice on the painful reality of our climate crisis. They also outlined a compelling commitment of their own to lead the low-carbon transition. We’ve seen only cautious global progress since that time; emissions are still rising nearly everywhere. Countries at the front-line increasingly suffer from the impacts of climate change. We should be paying close attention to the Forum’s message, because with this particular challenge the fate of the world is firmly tied to the fate of its most vulnerable groups.”

¹ **DARA** is an independent, international organization founded in 2003, and based in Madrid, Spain, where it is dedicated to improving assistance to vulnerable communities suffering from disasters, conflict and climate change through research, evaluations and technical assistance to governments and other partners. DARA is providing institutional assistance to the CVF – www.daraint.org

Bangladesh Foreign Minister, Dr. Dipu Moni speaking of the forthcoming Forum said:

“Absence of a clear will and concrete steps to reduce emissions place our countries at the risk of peril. So, we must raise our voice unitedly and demand accountability for inaction. While doing so, we, as the most affected, ought not to simply wait for international support. We must manifest our firm resolve to act, to the extent possible, autonomously and pursue green growth paths in our endeavours.”

The Forum’s Dhaka ministerial meeting, at the threshold of the Durban climate change talks, will provide a significant platform for the growing activities of the participant states, with global powers including China, the US and the UN taking part as observers. The Dhaka meeting aims to lay the path for what will become a series of regular interactions for raising awareness on the dangers of climate change and expressing the shared concerns of vulnerable countries in all relevant global forums.

The group intends to maintain concerted pressure for enhanced low-carbon leadership among industrialized countries, and external support for adapting to climate stresses and for pursuing independent green development through a combination of finance, capacity building and technology transfer – none of which have been adequately forthcoming from 16 previous annual conferences on climate change since parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) first met in Berlin in 1995.²

The CVF co-published, together with DARA, the *Climate Vulnerability Monitor* last December. That report pointed to a rapidly worsening climate crisis that between 2010 and 2020 could claim up to 5 million lives – mainly among children in developing countries – unless effective remedial actions are taken. It estimated that nearly 350,000 people already die each year as a result of the negative effects of climate change.

DARA Director General, Ross Mountain commented:

“Vulnerable countries possess the vision to do more, but face chronic shortages of technological means, capacity and finance to truly act. Industrialized countries have the means, but lack vision, despite the fact that floods, storms, drought, desertification and sea level rise heavily affect developed countries. Helping even harder hit vulnerable countries to take action will limit negative effects that everyone ultimately also suffers, whether it’s drought in the Horn of Africa or on the far-off islands of Tuvalu. Supporting green development among vulnerable countries will also make it cheaper for developed countries to reduce their dependency on a costly, insecure and unsafe carbon economy. This Forum can help to forge that partnership.”

DARA and the Government of Bangladesh are supported in this initiative by a variety of donors including the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and Fundación Biodiversidad, among others.

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² The UNFCCC is the main international treaty dealing with climate change together with its Kyoto Protocol. The UNFCCC is one of the most widely subscribed international instruments with 194 state parties.

NOTES TO EDITORS

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DARA

Founded in 2003, DARA is an independent, impartial, non-profit and non-governmental international organization committed to improving the quality and effectiveness of assistance to vulnerable groups suffering from conflict, disasters and climate change. Its activities have spanned over 40 countries across 5 continents. DARA is led by Ross Mountain who headed UN relief operations during the Iraq War following the Bagdad UN HQ bombing (2003-2004), and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2004-2009). In conjunction with the Climate Vulnerable Forum, DARA developed the *Climate Vulnerability Monitor 2010: The State of the Climate Crisis*, a major new global report on the current and evolving impact of climate change on human society, which is co-published together with the Climate Vulnerable Forum and available on DARA's website:

www.daraint.org/cvm

Climate Vulnerable Forum

The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) is the first global partnership of nations from Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Pacific united against a common threat as some of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. CVF countries have contributed least to a problem that threatens, in many cases, their very survival. The CVF first convened in the Maldives in November 2009 and adopted a declaration that expressed alarm at the pace of change to the Earth caused by climate change and sealed the commitment of participating nations to work in concert towards strongest action tackling global warming and its negative effects. Participating countries include: Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh (incoming chair), Barbados, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Kiribati (present chair), Liberia, Madagascar, Maldives (first chair), Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam. For more information on the CVF visit:

www.mofa.gov.bd