GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR BROAD-BASED CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION; WILL MEET TWICE MORE ON CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES THIS YEAR

The United Nations General Assembly concluded a three–day debate aimed at gaining the support from all parts of society to address climate change with a call that the Assembly should remain engaged in supporting the United Nations-led negotiations on climate change and in promoting effective coordination by the United Nations on the issue.

General Assembly President Srgjan Kerim said the Assembly would convene two additional meetings this year that will focus on the needs and concerns of vulnerable countries and on corporate responsibility and sustainability.

The General Assembly debate was extended by a full day to accommodate the 115 speakers, including 19 ministers and 7 vice-ministers, representing 107 countries. The dialogue focused on how to involve people from the private sector, business, academia and science in a sustained effort to address climate change. The Assembly debate attracted a significant number of high-profile personalities, including Richard Branson, CEO and founder of the Virgin Group, the actor Daryl Hannah and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

“There is a general conviction that has emerged from this debate,” Mr. Kerim said, “that the actions necessary to address climate change are so intertwined that they can only be tackled through combined efforts.”

Countries strongly supported the decisions reached at the Climate Change Convention in Bali in December. The Bali road map calls for the launch of negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change towards a new agreement and for immediate action on a number of issues, including adaptation, reducing emissions from deforestation and assistance on new technologies. The first of four rounds of negotiations on a new agreement will begin in Bangkok from 30 March to 4 April.

Mr. Kerim said that long-term targets to reduce carbon emission must go hand in hand with adapting to the global warming that is already taking place and which could accelerate. "We want more growth, more development, but must also secure our planet and safeguard our future.”

Many countries, both developing and developed, emphasized the need for accelerating the technological know-how necessary to build and maintain low-carbon economies that will also allow the economic growth that is necessary to eliminate poverty. Many States also called on the United Nations to help stimulate new financial investments that would be needed for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and for adapting to the impacts of climate change.

See archives of the webcast of the General Assembly debate at http://www.un.org/webcast. For daily meetings coverage of the debate, see Press Releases GA/10687, GA/10689 and GA/10690 at

For further information, please contact Janos Tisovszky, Spokesperson for the General Assembly President, tel.: +1 917 367 2068, e-mail: tisovszky@un.org or Dan Shepard, United Nations Department of Public Information, tel.: +1 212 963 9495, e-mail: shepard@un.org, and see http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/ThematicDebates/themclimatechange.shtml and http://www.un.org/climatechange.

* *** *

For information media • not an official record