

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE BETWEEN THE ARAB REGION AND THE SOUTH  
AMERICAN COMMUNITY OF NATIONS ON ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION**

The Arab and South American ministers in charge of environmental affairs,

Stressing their commitment to implement the decisions taken by the Arab and South-American Heads of States and Governments in Brasilia, in May 2005, as set out in the Brasilia Declaration;

Reiterating the commitment of the two regions to the principles and objectives stated in the main multilateral documents concerning sustainable development such as the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, adopted at the 1992 Rio Conference, as well as to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

Recognizing the importance of the environmental treaties, conventions, agreements and procedures agreed upon by the international community in order to protect the environment and achieve human wellbeing and sustainable development;

Recognizing also the regional and global nature of environmental issues, the urgency of seeking long-term effective solution through South-South cooperation and the importance of coordinating the joint action of the developing countries in order to strengthen South-South cooperation and better catalyze North-South Cooperation;

Emphasizing the importance of South-South cooperation, and recognizing the need for both regions to benefit from the many cooperation opportunities available for Arab and South American countries in realizing sustainable development;

Emphasizing also the existing potential for cooperation in the field of sustainable development and environmental protection, that conforms to their common concerns and would ultimately lead to the fulfilment of the long-term interests of the two regions;

Stressing that the diversity of the societies of the two regions favour the strengthening of their interrelation;

Underlining the importance of maintaining and intensifying close dialogue and coordination between the two regions on international environmental matters, on the understanding that cooperation between the two Regions on sustainable development and environmental protection is of mutual benefits and will further consolidate their friendly relations;

Stressing their shared aim to increase cooperation between the two regions in the field of sustainable development, natural resources conservation and environmental protection, taking into consideration the accumulated knowledge and experience in the two regions, the existing complementarities and the potential for innovation;

Noting the existence of initiatives in both regions addressing sustainable development and environmental issues, and expressing their shared interest to enhance cooperation and the exchange of experiences in the implementation of those initiatives;

Taking into consideration the outcome of the Seminar on Arid Lands and Water Resources (Fortaleza, Brazil, September 2004);

Highlighting the need for international cooperation to reduce the vulnerability of countries to natural disasters and to respond to their adverse effects;

Recognizing that one third of humanity suffers from desertification and that it is one of the important environmental problems facing humanity at the present, it causes and will continue to cause severe damages on nature in general and on the human being in particular. It leads to the decline and deterioration of wealth, the increase in poverty and hunger, reduction in water resources, rural displacement and random migration, lack of security and other negative effects. This requires more and extended pledges for deserts, their peoples and the problem of desertification in the framework of an effective international partnership;

Expressing their deep concern at the adverse effects of climate change, the depletion of the ozone layer, the loss of biodiversity, and the mismanagement of hazardous waste, that led to environmental contamination and pollution, the destruction of wealth which put in danger human life and in violate MEAs;

Acknowledging the fact that both regions have a long history of dedication to issues that comprise the ever-growing international environmental agenda;

Recalling the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and emphasizing the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and the social and economic conditions; and in this light, stressing the importance of the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol including the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) as well as expediting the operation of the Adaptation Fund as soon as possible;

Stressing the importance of achieving the threefold objectives of the Convention on Biological diversity, in particular through the negotiation of an international regime on access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge and related benefit-sharing (ABS), as well as the attainment of 2010 Biodiversity Target;

Appreciating UNEP's willingness to provide active support to the environmental cooperation between the Arab States and the South American Countries;

Taking into account the Bali strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Program in February 2005;

Stressing the need for developed countries to fulfil their commitments regarding the financing of development, capacity building, the transfer of technology and the expansion of market access for exports from developing countries, in such a manner that contributes to the achievement of the sustainable development objectives of developing countries;

1. Declare that the areas of interregional cooperation are:

- Capacity building, technical cooperation and technology transfer;
- Biodiversity (including bio-safety);
- Urban environmental management, waste management, pollution control and clean technologies;
- Integrated water resources management;

- Combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, and management of arid and semi-arid zones;
  - Integrated management of coastal zones;
  - Assessment of climate change impact on the environment;
  - Energy for sustainable development;
  - Natural disaster prevention;
  - Environmental policy, legislation and management tools;
  - Education and public awareness;
  - Other areas agreed upon by the two regions;
2. Agree upon the following means for cooperation between the two regions under this Joint Communiqué:
    - Exchange of relevant environmental information and data;
    - Exchange of experts and expertise in different environmental and sustainable development fields;
    - Joint organization of workshops, symposiums and other fora;
    - Promotion of the implementation of international environmental agreements;
    - Promotion of the establishment and development of direct contacts of their environmental agencies, organizations and enterprises engaged in environmental protection;
    - Promotion of consultations and coordination on their positions on global environmental issues;
    - Other forms of cooperation agreed upon by the two Regions;
  3. The two Regions will coordinate their positions on global environmental problems. In this connection the two parties agree to support the Arab Group proposal which requests the UN General Assembly to declare the period 2010-2020 as a UN Decade for Deserts & Combating Desertification.
  4. In order to achieve the objectives of this Communiqué, the two regions declare their willingness to develop a Biennial Executive Program for the implementation of the activities listed in this Joint Communiqué, taking into account financing aspects/needs;
  5. In order to ensure the follow up to the implementation of this Joint Communiqué, the two regions will endeavour to promote ministerial or technical meetings, as appropriate preferably on the sidelines of other international environmental meetings.
  6. Any contents of this Joint Communiqué shall not influence the obligations of the two Regions for implementing any environmental treaties, conventions, or regional or international agreements. The activities under this Joint Communiqué are in

conformity with the overall policies, laws and regulations of each country of the two Regions.

This Joint Communiqué has been issued in Nairobi – Kenya on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2007. The original is done in Arabic, English, Portuguese and Spanish