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THE WORLD BANK

Working for a World
Free of Poverty

NEWS RELEASE

Quotes (approved for attribution) from global leaders on the World Bank “Turn Down The Heat” report and the climate challenge

“This new report from the World Bank reminds us that climate change is happening - now. The evidence is clear. No country is immune. If we mobilize today, we can make a difference for tomorrow. World leaders have agreed to forge a legally binding agreement by 2015, and we must hold them to that commitment. We also need all actors to turn challenge into opportunity. We have the technology and the resources. Let us apply the will to create a sustainable future.”

Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General

“While the global community targets a maximum 2°C rise in global temperatures, this timely World Bank report highlights the possibility of a 4°C rise this century and shows how we, the international community, continue to fail our children’s children. Do we really wish to leave future generations with a world of deadly droughts, flooded coastal cities, and the loss of priceless biodiversity including coral reefs? I thoroughly commend this landmark report to anybody with an interest in climate change, arguably the 21st century’s biggest issue. We, the world, still have time to implement new policies, adapt our course, and prevent the more dangerous effects of climate change.”

Kofi Annan, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations

“In our capacity as host of the Green Climate Fund, we are pleased to see the World Bank’s commitment to climate solutions. Never has it been more important to find financial solutions to the green growth challenges we face for a future we all share and invest in.”

Jae Hwan Bahk, Minister of Strategy and Finance of the Republic of Korea

“The recently released Climate Vulnerability Monitors revealed how failure to act decisively on climate change has already caused unprecedented damage to the world economy and threatens human life across the globe. I welcome the World Bank’s timely call for a global response equal to the scale of the climate crisis.”

Laura Chinchilla, President of the Republic of Costa Rica

“Without immediate action to solve the climate crisis, catastrophic warming will fundamentally change our planet and disrupt the climate balance in which human civilization has flourished.

This prospect amounts to a general threat to world political and economic stability. It marks the point at which considerations of political convenience must give way to considerations of human welfare on a global scale, involving not just developing countries but countries such as our own.

This is a common challenge to political leadership, and it represents an inescapable standard against which that leadership will be judged not just in the distant future, but in the time of those now living and soon to be born. The World Bank, under the leadership of Dr. Jim Kim, will play an absolutely crucial role in achieving a sustainable future and averting disaster for humankind.”

Al Gore, Former Vice President of the United States of America

“We are clearly running against time and this report underscores need for stepping up global efforts to curb emissions while securing sustainable energy access for all. A renewable energy revolution is needed. Only then can we achieve a climate resilient future.”

Heikki Eidsvoll Holmås, Minister of International Development of the Kingdom of Norway

“At the very moment that Africa is poised to make its mark on the global economy, this report shows us that the continent will be one of the worst affected by climate change. We need strong commitments and urgent action to mitigate the impact, and to assist countries to survive and develop in a context of climate change and extreme weather patterns.”

Tina Joemat-Pettersson, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of the Republic of South Africa

“This new World Bank Report is very alarming, not just for Samoa and the Pacific region, but for the whole world. It validates compellingly the scientific presentation made to SIDS leaders during their recent Summit on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly. The impacts of climate change are already being felt, and that is why SIDS are calling for a cap of 1.5 degrees Celsius. Going beyond 2 degrees towards a 4 degree world would be cataclysmic. The dire consequences now predicted in the World Bank report will unavoidably be given greater focus in the 3rd international conference on SIDS that Samoa will host in 2014. I have always maintained that climate change knows no boundaries and as a global problem we must all work together and act now.”

Tuilaepa Sailele Lufesoloai Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa

“A 4 degree world would be devastating for developing countries and the poor would be hit hardest. Gabon is committed to building climate smart development.”

Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic

“The world needs a new narrative of climate justice that places people at its center, that’s informed by human rights, that strives for equity, and that protects the most vulnerable. I hope the World Bank’s increased focus on climate action and solutions will also lead to a more inclusive global dialogue on this critical issue.”

Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland and Former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

“This report shows that a rise in global temperature of four degrees would create huge risks that would affect the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people across the world. An emissions pathway which gives us about a 50-50 chance of avoiding a rise of 2 degrees would carry a small chance of global warming of three degrees, and a very small chance of four degrees, but if we aim for a less demanding target, those probabilities would grow. While this report makes clear the benefits of avoiding these risks by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it is important to recognise the other advantages and opportunities from making the transition to low-carbon economic growth and development, including an energy and industrial revolution with all the creativity, innovation of past transformations, such as the introduction of the railways or electricity.”

Nicholas Stern, Chair of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment at the London School of Economics and Political Science

“Brazil welcomes relevant international organizations such as the World Bank Group’s increasing engagement in providing support to the international endeavours to find solutions to the climate challenge. Such support should positively influence international negotiations to move ahead towards fulfilling the agreements reached in Durban within UNFCCC and to agree on a legally binding agreement under the Convention and applicable to all Parties, by 2015. In Brazil, we remain fully engaged in our efforts to reduce deforestation and land use change emissions. Brazil is ready to actively collaborate in building inclusive and equitable answers to this collective challenge and encourages others to join hands.”

Izabella Teixeira, Minister of the Environment of the Federative Republic of Brazil

“For small island developing states, a four degree world is unthinkable. Already at 0.8 degrees above pre-industrial levels, islands and the rest of the world are experiencing devastating impacts of climate change; some seven years ago, Hurricane Ivan caused damages worth 200% of Grenada’s GDP and to rebuild from the hurricane dramatically increased the island’s financial indebtedness. There is a growing consensus that the deadly and costly Hurricane Sandy is climate related. Islands like Grenada have been calling on the international community to limit warming to well below 2.0 degrees Celsius, and believe that below 1.5 degrees is preferable. Averting climate disasters must be a top priority for the international community. We therefore commend the World Bank on this report.”

Tillman J. Thomas, Prime Minister of Grenada, co-Chair of the Global Islands Alliance and former chair of the Alliance of Small Islands States