



## **Climate Change Task Force issues urgent Appeal for Rio+20 conference to take global warming threat seriously**

11 June, 2012 – Geneva: World leaders must do more to respond to the threat of climate change, and the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Brazil should prioritize action against the drivers of global warming, according to an Appeal issued today by the high-level Climate Change Task Force.

The [Climate Change Task Force](#) (CCTF), is convened by President Mikhail Gorbachev, and comprises scientists, economists, former heads of state, Nobel prize laureates as well as climate and sustainable development experts from developed and developing countries.

“Effective action to avert the destabilization of the climate is, in fact, a pre-condition for successful progress towards sustainable world development, which will be the focus of Rio+20,” the Task Force says in its three-page Appeal for Urgent Action on Climate Change. “We must position climate change in the wider context of sustainable economic and social development and identify and act on its underlying causes, which are rooted in our present values and consequent social and economic choices and actions.”

President Gorbachev says: “The Climate Change Task Force is appealing to the heads of state and decision-makers at the Rio+20 conference to ensure that the climate change challenge is put clearly onto the agenda and that a strong political commitment is made to take action against this threat.”

The Appeal has been endorsed by more than 30 influential figures from many fields, including European Union Climate Commissioner Connie Hedegaard, environmentalist David Suzuki, former Netherlands Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, Ashok Khosla, President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Konrad Otto-Zimmermann, Secretary General of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Dmitri Zenghelis, Chief Economist at Cisco Climate Change Practice and London School of Economics Visiting Senior Fellow, and Sir David King, former Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Prime Minister.

Alexander Likhotal, President of Green Cross International, which hosts the Task Force, says on-going negotiations on the final outcome document proposed for Rio+20 are paying too little attention to climate change.

“The United Nations is [highlighting](#) the urgent need for action, stating that little or no progress has been made on climate change, desertification, drought, fish stocks and dozens of internationally agreed goals and objectives to support sustainable management of the environment and improve human wellbeing,” adds Mr Likhotal. “But leadership means not just recognition of the problem, but about offering a solution to resolve the problem.”

The Appeal is being followed by the 18 June release in Rio of the Task Force’s first joint statement on “Action to Face the Urgent Realities of Climate Change.”

As climate change and environmental degradation pose growing threats to humanity, President Gorbachev has convened the high-level Climate Change Task Force to stimulate an urgent and profound international response to the challenges, and to build the critical mass and political will needed for deep rooted societal change capable of containing and reversing the effects of these threats.

**Related content:**

- Download the Appeal for Urgent Action on Climate Change.

- [English](#)
- [Portuguese](#)
- [Spanish](#)

- Climate Change Task Force [website](#)

- Video [interviews](#) with Task Force members

- Event [notice](#) for 18 June launch in Rio of the “Action to Face the Urgent Realities of Climate Change” statement.

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