



UMHVERFISRÁÐUNEYTIÐ

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## **Statement by Ms. Thórunn Sveinbjarnardóttir, Icelandic Minister for the Environment**

Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here in the historic city of Poznan, and enjoy the hospitality of the Polish government and people.

In Bali, we laid out a road map for negotiations, that are to conclude in some twelve months in Copenhagen with an agreement on enhanced climate action. Poznan is an important milestone to assess progress and move forward our deliberations.

It is encouraging to see that the Poznan meeting has made progress in forging a shared vision for a common goal and the main elements for reaching that goal. Iceland believes we should aim to limit global temperature increases to 2 degrees Celsius from preindustrial times. Achieving that goal will require an effort by all major emitters, with developed countries leading the way. We must chart a pathway towards a climate-friendly future and true sustainable development. We must aim to clean up all major sectors of our economy, and develop and spread low- and zero-carbon technologies.

Iceland sees the role of carbon markets as helpful in this regard. The flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol and domestic and regional carbon markets have already shown tangible results. We should work on expanding these markets, as well as improving their foundations, to ensure that they provide real and measurable results. We need less greed and more green in the global financial system. Robust carbon markets are important in providing flexibility of action and facilitating comparability of effort. Fair effort-sharing, based on transparent and widely accepted criteria, will help a new agreement to succeed.

Lack of modern energy services hampers development for some two billion people. Energy generation is also the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions. It is a clear priority to guide investment towards renewable energy and climate-friendly technology.

Iceland has long been a champion for the greater use of geothermal energy, which can be used by hundreds of millions of people. We want to join hands with others that advocate the development and spread of renewable energy. Icelanders already enjoy almost 100% climate-friendly

electricity and heating; the next challenge is to convert mobile sources – cars and ships – to electricity or alternative fuels. We are already forging partnerships with industry for this purpose.

The second biggest source of emissions is land use and forestry. There are many win-win opportunities in land-use, combining climate mitigation gains with increased food production, actions combatting desertification and conservation of biodiversity. Iceland has suggested that the conservation and restoration of wetlands be integrated into the Kyoto Protocol regime. Degraded wetlands and peatlands are currently a big source of emissions, that can be halted by restoration efforts.

We have much work ahead of us, and little time. Let us reach a conclusion in Copenhagen. Let us all work towards halting climate change, by cleaning up our energy systems, our technologies and our way of life. Let us all work on that task, women and men. Women have a key role in both climate mitigation and adaptation actions, and must feature prominently in the decision-making process, both at the global and local levels. Gender concerns need to be woven into the climate change regime, including funding for adaptation. The Earth is our home and most valuable asset. There is no nobler task than joining our hands in preserving its climate and other life-supporting systems. Let Poznan be remembered as not only a milestone on the road from Bali to Copenhagen, but towards a better planet.

Thank you,