



**World Creative Youth Forum
Quezon City, The Philippines, 5-10 May 2009**

**Statement by Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Climate change is already with us but, if we do not combat it effectively, I am acutely aware that the worst impacts will be in a future that will affect those who now are young. The voice of youth is being raised, telling the world in no uncertain terms that climate change is at the top of their fears for the future. Your voice must be heard clearly and it must be respected by those who now make decisions, particularly those who are now crafting a global agreement to combat climate change at Copenhagen at the end of this year. I congratulate you on your event and encourage you to speak with a united and loud voice.

Young people are some of the strongest advocates for environmental preservation, as they have demonstrated through their contributions to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The plan adopted at that summit highlights the need to promote and support youth participation in programmes and activities relating to sustainable development.

A youth movement has also now developed and gained momentum around climate change, which has become a rallying concern for the young generation, with hundreds of grassroots initiatives and national campaigns springing up in countries around the world. Youth representatives have been present at climate negotiations since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and I hope to see over 1000 young people representing their generation in Copenhagen in December this year.

At this critical time for the climate change agenda, the first World Creative Youth Forum will no doubt contribute to raise awareness amongst young people of the challenges of climate change and give them an opportunity to have their voices heard and join millions of others in a global youth climate movement, which demands a global agreement that will ensure a future prosperity and sustainable life for all nations and peoples.
