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JOINT ARTICLE BY ALAIN JUPPÉ, MINISTRE D'ÉTAT, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, AND NATHALIE KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET, MINISTER FOR ECOLOGY, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND HOUSING, IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPER «LE MONDE»

[Paris, 8 December 2011]

French climate proposals

The signals are clear, consistent and alarming. The latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sheds light on the increasing frequency of extreme climate events: floods, droughts and cyclones.

The United Nations Environment Programme recalls that national efforts will not suffice to limit the average global temperature rise to two degrees by the end of the century. If decisive action is not taken in the next five years, the International Energy Agency (IEA) predicts a temperature increase of approximately three degrees and potentially as high as six degrees.

A six degree average rise would mean an increase of ten or twenty degrees at certain latitudes. It would mean a probable difference of several metres in sea level. It would mean population displacement because of climatic disasters on an unpredictable scale. It would threaten the food security of millions of people.

Global greenhouse gas emissions are hitting record levels, not only from industrialized countries but also, increasingly, from emerging economies. Today's important international negotiations at Durban appear eclipsed by the economic crisis.

Of course, a number of major countries, including France and its European partners, are conducting true climate change control policies. Certain emerging countries have understood the importance of the issue and improved their energy efficiency. But everyone is fighting this battle individually, whilst these phenomena defy all borders. Without decisive and immediate international action, we will collectively pay the price for indecision. The President of the Maldives, who visited Paris in October, put it eloquently: «We cannot negotiate with nature».

France, alongside its European partners, wants to do whatever is necessary to stave off the expected failure at Durban. We are prepared to prolong the commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, which expires this year, if the international community commits at the same time to a new, legally binding agreement.



To rise to the occasion, this agreement must involve the main world economies and have for objective a fifty percent reduction in global emissions by 2050.

France wants to support the efforts of developing countries - particularly the most vulnerable countries - as we pledged to do in Copenhagen. Already, the European Union has kept its promises and provided more than 4.6 billion euros since 2010 to finance the fight against climate change in developing countries.

France would like to go further to ensure the financing of the massive needs of the fight against climate change. The French Presidency of the G20 made the implementation of a tax on financial transactions one of its priorities.

This financing must come alongside other initiatives, such as pricing the carbon emissions of international maritime and air transport or developing carbon markets, as is already done - or envisaged - in China, India and Australia.

It is with this mindset that we will be present in Durban, steadfast but open to dialogue./.

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Media Enquiry:

Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau
Audrey PION, Consul (Political/ Public Relations) / Julia CHAN, Press Officer
T : +852 3752 9921
F : +852 3752 9905
E : press@consulfrance-hongkong.org

Web-site: <http://consulfrance-hongkong.org/>
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/franceinhk>