

**GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME (UNEP)
Monaco, February 2008**

**Concerns : International Decade of Combatting Climate Change
Draft decision submitted by Algeria**

Statement made by Cyril Ritchie during the substantive discussion on the draft decision

Mr Chairman, I speak to this draft decision on behalf of the NGO Major Group. This statement has the support also of the Women's Major Group.

We speak as *Partners in Climate Action*, a concept so often evoked in this Governing Council, a concept cherished by UNEP.

Mr Chairman, combatting climate change – which many already call *climate chaos* – requires the input, the commitment, the competence of all stakeholders, starting with UNEP itself.

To combat climate change, we all need to inform and engage national public opinion in all countries, North and South.

United Nations Years and Decades have been proven to be one helpful way of mobilizing public opinion, including of course women and youth.

We therefore thank Algeria for this initiative to have the UN General Assembly declare an International Decade of Combatting Climate Change, and we especially express thanks to the Algerian delegate for his emphasis on the citizen component in planning and implementing the Decade. We urge the Governing Council to adopt this decision and put political will behind it. On our part, we shall certainly engage in mobilizing public opinions in this sense.

Finally, Mr Chairman, we note that the proposed period, 2010-2020, is already the UN Decade for Deserts and the fight against desertification. There are certainly synergies to be elaborated once the proposal is taken up by the UN General Assembly and the broader stakeholder communities. As *Partners*, we shall be ready.

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