

# 4<sup>TH</sup> IUCN ACADEMY OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW COLLOQUIUM

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL KOFI ANNAN

STATEMENT TO THE 4<sup>TH</sup> COLLOQUIUM OF THE  
IUCN ACADEMY OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

NEW YORK, 15 OCTOBER 2006

It is a pleasure to send my greetings to all the participants in this colloquium. The IUCN Academy of Environmental Law has taken important steps in recent years to promote international cooperation among university law faculties. Those efforts are helping to strengthen the legal and educational foundations of sustainable development, and to build up capacity for compliance with multilateral environmental agreements.

The number of ratifications of major multilateral environmental agreements has been growing, an encouraging sign suggesting that more countries are committed to addressing global environmental issues. But the true test remains implementation and enforcement. Action on climate change is particularly urgent, given its profound implications for virtually every aspect of human well-being, from jobs and health to growth and security. Until we stop treating climate change as a strictly environmental concern, and instead recognize the full nature of this threat, our action will fall short.

At the 2005 World Summit, world leaders decided on a number of measures aimed at protecting our common environment, including a call for a more coherent institutional framework to address environmental challenges. For my part, I have established the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence that will shortly present proposals on how to increase the effectiveness of our activities in the areas of development, humanitarian affairs and the environment.

Ensuring environmental sustainability is one of the main pillars of the global fight against poverty, and is essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Your colloquium is well placed to contribute to that work, and I offer you my best wishes for the success of your deliberations.