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Statement of Ambassador Rodica Radian
On Behalf of the State of Israel
UNFCCC COP 16 and CMP 6
Cancun, Mexico, December 2010

H.E. Mrs Patricia Espinosa, President of the COP
Ms Christiana Figueres, UNFCCC Executive Secretary
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honor for me to speak on behalf of the Government of Israel at the 16th Conference of the Parties to the climate change convention. Allow me to thank the Government of Mexico for their hospitality in hosting this meeting.

The Israeli minister of Environmental Protection has asked me to convey his regrets that he could not be present today, and to say that he is closely following the developments in Cancun from Jerusalem.

At Copenhagen, Israel's President Shimon Peres announced Israel's commitment to achieving a 20% emissions reduction target by 2020 compared to a business as usual scenario.

Today I am proud to report that substantial progress has been made during the past year.

A government decision was recently passed for implementation of a National Action Plan which will bring us close to achieving our target. The recommendations submitted to the government for mitigation measures were the result of months of work carried out by a professional interministerial committee culminating in an

unprecedented investment of more than 600 million dollars over the coming decade. The mix of policy measures adopted include:

- Substantial financial support for projects reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the industrial, commercial and public sectors.
- Investment in green building and retrofit
- Scrapping energy inefficient electrical goods and stringent regulations for new appliances
- Integration of environmental technologies
- Extensive educational programming and raising public awareness

Reducing emissions from the transportation sector poses a significant challenge. Therefore, Israel initiated a national program for the development of technologies to reduce the dependency on oil for transportation. This includes substantial investments in R&D and in innovative Israeli companies that focus on realistic alternatives such as biofuels, synthetic fuels and electric cars.

More measures will need to be taken, however, these milestone decisions have paved the way for Israel's climate policy and all this at a time global economic constraints reflected in many countries making cutbacks in their environmental investment.

To sum up this point – in the area of GHG mitigation, in just over two years Israel has undergone a major **voluntary** shift towards policy tools aimed at a maximum reduction of GHG emissions commensurate with Israel's abilities and needs

This September Israel became the 33rd member of the OECD and its third non Annex 1 member. We are aware of our moral responsibility to promote a low carbon economy. We are committed to being actively involved in the negotiations for the future climate regime and we intend to join together in combating the destructive effects of climate change.

With respect to adaptation, Israel remains committed to share her extensive experience in adaptation to semi arid climatic conditions including combating desertification, afforestation and her expertise in environmental technologies in areas such as solar energy technologies, water management – desalination, Green IT, geothermal energy, energy from waste, energy efficiency technologies as well as the more traditional areas of Agro-technology which will become increasingly central as the effects of climate change challenge food security.

Distinguished delegates,

Last week, a terrible forest fire broke out in northern Israel devastating acres of land. This was the worst fire Israel has experienced and resulted in loss of life and the evacuation of thousands of people from their homes, hectares of devastated forest area including a large percentage of limited natural forests that exist in the country. This had been the hottest and driest November on record after years of drought and the dry land made it impossible to extinguish the flames.

Finally, the fire was controlled through assistance we received from many countries, from our region as well as others, and I would like to take this opportunity to express Israel's heartfelt thanks for the generous help received.

This international cooperation that was so needed in fighting the flames in Israel further emphasizes the significance of the global effort that is required when dealing with the challenges of climate change

This spirit of shared destiny between the people of this planet lies at the heart of the Climate Change Convention and as leaders we must do whatever it takes to reflect that spirit by coming to an agreed outcome here in Cancun.

Thank you.