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Statement by Mr Andreas Carlgren, Minister for the Environment, Sweden, to the COP16, Cancun, Mexico, Wednesday December 8th, 2010

Madame/Mr President, Climate change is an exceptional challenge. We are running out of time. Action cannot wait. What should be our conclusions?

First: The future strength of multilateral cooperation is at stake. And what is the essence of multilateral cooperation? It is about achieving progress in what we all see is necessary for the world, not just what satisfies a few. The climate can only be saved through joint efforts. A cooperation full of trust must be created and maintained. I turn to you, our Mexican hosts and especially to you COP President Patricia Espinosa, and say: We are grateful for all the efforts made in this regard.

Second: We must tackle the issue of equity. It must be said: The rich world has laid claim to by far the greatest portion of the earth's natural resources and in effect has bought itself an economic standard at the cost of environmental destruction. At the same time, the poorest people, who are the least to blame for the problems, are affected first and worst. Let it be crystal clear: The developed countries must now take the lead in making major emission reductions, as well as assisting developing countries to adapt.

Madame/Mr President, Sweden provides 1.1 billion US dollars in support to immediate actions in developing countries and we are ready to take our share of long-term financing. And I stress: All countries should stand by their pledges from Copenhagen.

Public support will have a decisive role to play. But, new financing alternatives also need to be explored. For example: International transport should bear its own climate costs through taxes and charges. The money can help to finance climate initiatives in developing countries. Fossil fuel subsidies should be faced out.

Third: Time is running out and we need to act now. Global emissions are increasing when they should be decreasing. The world is in urgent need of green development. The rich world needs to reduce its ecological footprint and the poor needs to be lifted out of poverty. The true answer to this

is that the path towards a low carbon and green economy is the only possible way to economic growth.

Madame/Mr President, Sweden does not intend to wait. Sweden has already reduced emissions by 12 percent since 1990 while our economy has grown by 50 percent. We intend to lead. Why? Because we will benefit from a green economic development. In ten years we will reduce our emissions by 40 percent. In ten years, half of our energy will be renewable. In twenty years time, our vehicle fleet will no longer be dependent on fossil fuels.

We are also prepared for a second commitment period of the Kyoto protocol within a framework that includes all the major emitters and that preserves environmental integrity.

We challenge all major emitters to do their part. Over 140 countries have given their support to the Copenhagen Accord. But commitments made are too low. We must enhance our collective efforts. Immediate action is also necessary against rain forest destruction, for reductions in HFC and against black carbon emissions.

Let Cancún be the start of new spirit in climate talks and action. Let renewed trust become the spirit of our work. And let us thereafter be able to look back and say: it was in Cancún we found a better track towards our common future.