

ACTION

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# UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

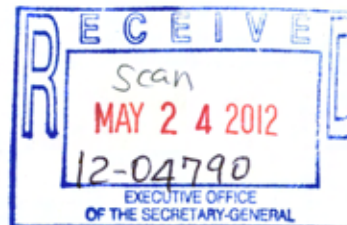
Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement    Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente  
 Программа Организации Объединённых Наций по окружающей среде    برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

联合国环境规划署



Our reference: DELC/World Congress/WC

Date: 10 May 2012



Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

I am writing with reference to an important initiative UNEP is leading as part of its contribution to the Rio+20 Conference, namely the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability. This is a generational opportunity for the world's Chief Justices, Attorneys General and Auditors General to contribute to the debates on the environment and I would like to invite you to address the Congress at its opening at the Supreme Court of Rio de Janeiro on 17 June 2012 at 4 p.m.

The rule of law has long been highlighted as an indispensable tool on the path towards sustainable development and 'greener' economies, particularly by the United Nations system.

The World Congress, as underscored through its preparatory process, offers a unique opportunity to the judiciary of the United Nations member states, including national audit offices, to bring high-level attention to the role that Justice, Governance and Law play in promoting environmental sustainability, and as the underlying foundations of transition to more sustainable societies and of transitioning to a green economy. It will also bring attention to the special role of the judiciary and the legal and auditing community in regard to protecting the environment, and strengthening appropriate mechanisms and tools to safeguard and promote sustainability. As such, the conclusions and recommendations of the World Congress and its preparatory process will feed into the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and its main themes, as well as build the foundation for a long lasting cooperation with member states in the field of justice, governance and law for environmental sustainability.

The World Congress is organized by UNEP in partnership with a range of global and regional organizations active in the area of environmental law and sustainable development, including the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions – Working Group on Environmental Auditing (INTOSAI - WGEA), the Organization of American States (OAS), the South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE).

Mr. Ban Ki-moon  
 Secretary-General  
 United Nations Headquarters  
 Room NL – 03019  
 New York, NY 10017  
 USA

Executive Office

P. O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya • Tel: (254 20) 762 3386/3416/ 3652 • Fax: (254 20) 762 4275 / 4608 • E-mail: executiveoffice@unep.org

www.unep.org

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Your presence at the opening of the World Congress will be crucial for obtaining a productive outcome and for creating a solid partnership across and beyond the United Nations on which to build long-term action to strengthen environmental sustainability through justice, governance and law.

I hope you will be able to accept this invitation. In case your schedule does not permit you to address the Congress in person, I would be grateful if you could deliver a video message.

Yours sincerely,

Achim Steiner  
Executive Director

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P. O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya • Tel: (254 20) 762 3386/3416/ 3652 • Fax: (254 20) 762 4275 / 4608 • E-mail: [executiveoffice@unep.org](mailto:executiveoffice@unep.org)

[www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)