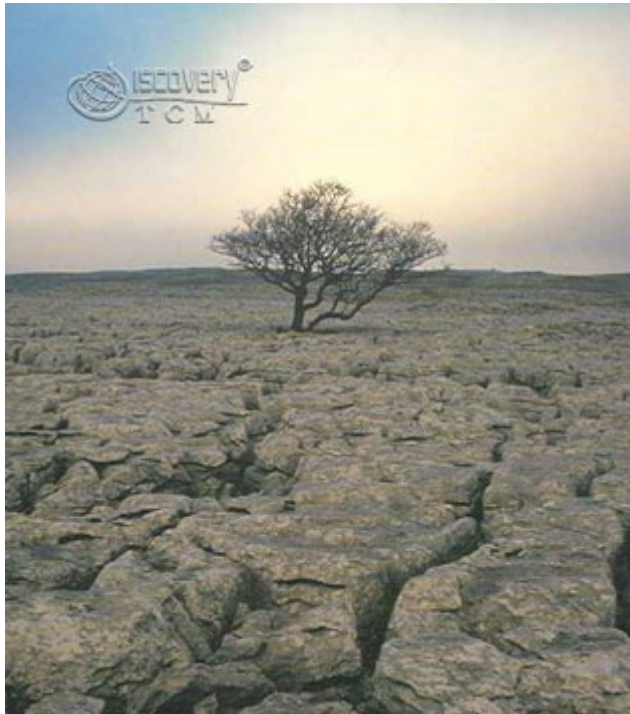


## Binding treaty on climate change to be reached in 2010



UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said here Monday that a legally binding treaty on climate change will be reached in 2010.

"The legally binding treaty will be reached as soon as possible in 2010," Ban told reporters here after he met with visiting French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The secretary-general made the statement hours after the opening of the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark.

The Copenhagen conference, officially known as the 15th

Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), will conclude on Dec. 18.

Around 100 leaders from the UN member countries and about 12, 000 delegates and specialists from more than 170 countries will attend the conference.

"Our target, our goal, is to have a legally binding treaty ... as soon as possible in 2010," Ban said. "But before that, we must have a strong political agreement in Copenhagen."

"The more ambitious, the stronger agreement we have in Copenhagen, the easier, the quicker the process we will have to a legally binding treaty in 2010, as early as possible," he said. " This is our commitment."

"The momentum has been created. This is a decisive moment. We must seal the deal," he said. "I am encouraged that more than 105 heads of state and government are committed to participate in the leaders' meeting on the 18th of the month."

The secretary-general will head for Copenhagen next week to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference which opened Monday in the Danish capital, his spokesman Martin Nesirky told reporters here, adding that Ban will attend the high-level segment of the conference, which begins on Dec. 15.

The secretary-general expected "a robust agreement at Copenhagen that will be effective immediately and include specific commitments on mitigation, adaptation finance and technology," Nesirky said.

Ban said "Copenhagen can and must be the turning point in the world's efforts to prevent runaway climate change and usher in a new era of green growth for all," the spokesman said.

Kouchner was at the UN Headquarters to lobby for the financial- transaction tax,

which demands a 0.005 percent levy on all trade of currency across borders.

The tax proceeds would be used to advance sustainable development concerning food security, education, health and climate change. Some 58 countries and organizations have voiced support for the tax, according to the French Foreign Ministry.

"It will be done," Kouchner told a press conference after his meeting with Ban, adding his initiative is conducive to the global efforts to reach the target set up in the UN Millennium Goals.

"We also discussed how to generate and mobilize the necessary financial support," Ban said. "One of the ideas was innovative financing. The French government has been leading and playing a champion role in generating innovative finance for development and health, and now on climate change, I hope this will be discussed in Copenhagen, as a way to generate financial support in addition to public fundings to be provided by the governments."

For his part, Kouchner, standing beside the secretary-general, told reporters that "We are now a bit more optimistic getting a political statement at the end of the Copenhagen conference and after, political statement is very important, of course, but the implementation of that political statement is up to the secretary-general and UN system."

"That's why so interesting, considering, the fate of developing countries," he said. "They are hoping after the Copenhagen conference to get some help -- particular help for their development."

"Of course, it was the Millennium Goals ... this is close to climate change," he said. "This additional burdens are of course facing us. So, yes, we are taking the innovative sources of financing -- this initiative coming from France and with 59 countries working on this international contribution."

During the meeting, Ban and Kouchner also touched upon the situation in Afghanistan, Sudan and Guinea.

On Afghanistan, Ban said, "We are going to have an international conference in London on Jan. 28. I am sure that that will provide an opportunity to help the Afghan government to establish, first of all, a strong good government structure, and also institution building."

"That will be a very good opportunity for strengthening the compact between the international community and Afghanistan," he said.

On Sudan, the secretary-general said, "We are going through a very crucial, important period, next year, starting with elections; also a referendum to be held in 2011. We will have to make progress in deployment of peacekeeping operations and implementations of the comprehensive peace agreement in Sudan."

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