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PRESS RELEASE

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European Commission launches 2nd European Development Days with focus on climate change

The second edition of "European Development Days" opens today in Lisbon with the impact of climate change on developing countries top of the agenda. Around 1000 decision-makers and stakeholders on development issues are set to attend the 3-day event in the Portuguese capital. This year's forum aims to focus on climate change issues and how to respond to the needs of already vulnerable countries hardest hit by the impacts of climate change. On Thursday, speakers and participants will address the linkage between climate change, poverty and migration and examine how developing nations can best adapt.

President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, said: "Climate change is the greatest challenge of our generation. Developed countries have a special responsibility to take the lead in cutting emissions and pushing a comprehensive, global agreement on future climate action, in the UN framework. Last week in Lisbon, we launched the International Carbon Action Partnership, an initiative of pioneers from around the world to develop a global carbon market. Focusing the second edition of the European Development Days on climate change stresses this sense of global responsibility in tackling this issue. We are determined to help developing countries to face the impact of climate change on the environment and on human and social development."

European Commissioner for Development and humanitarian aid, Louis Michel, will be present throughout the three-day event in Lisbon. Commissioner Michel said: "Nobody does more for developing countries than Europe. We are on track with scaling up development assistance, we are making it more effective together with the Member States and we strive to ensure other EU policies like trade and environment more coherent with development goals. All this effort could go to waste if we do not act on climate change. This is the biggest single challenge which we need to tackle together with our partners in developing countries."

In September, the European Commission proposed a Global Alliance specific to climate change. The aim is to encourage adaptation measures, reduce emissions from deforestation, take advantage of the global carbon market and help developing countries be better prepared for natural disasters.

South Africans scheduled to take part include prominent academic Dr Chris Landsberg and Western Cape Minister of Environment, Planning and Economic Development, Ms Tasneem Essop, on behalf of the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development.

DEVDAYS 2007 takes place in the run up to the EU-Africa Summit on 8-9 December and the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali from 14 December.

For a full programme and further information: <http://www.eudevdays.eu>
Further details of the Global Climate Change Alliance: IP/07/1352

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