



## Human Development Report 2007/2008 Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world



### UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM MESSAGES FROM THE REPORT

- 1 The Human Development Report 2007/2008 *Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world* follows on the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the 2006 Stern Report on the Economics of Climate Change. Where the IPCC report provides the definitive scientific basis for understanding climate change, and the Stern Report the economic assessment, the Human Development Report 2007/2008 is the report about people and how we are all affected by climate change.
- 2 The Report underscores the fact that the poor are suffering and will suffer more with climate change. Given that 40 per cent of the world's population live in poverty and are unable to meet their daily basic needs, these 2.6 billion people are at risk to face firsthand the impacts of dangerous climate change and human development reversals.
- 3 The Report makes a case for the urgency with which climate change needs to be addressed. Time matters for all of us. Today we are living with what we did yesterday; tomorrow we will all live with what we do today. We need to take action now.
- 4 Climate change is affecting the Earth's ecosystems. To the extent that we depend on these ecosystems for a range of services and resources – from water to agriculture to livelihoods and many others – climate change poses a serious threat to our ability to meet the eight Millennium Development Goals. The fact that the poor are already seeing its impacts only underscores the worsening situation if significant efforts to stop climate change are not taken.
- 5 The United Nations is built on the foundations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Preamble to that document talks of the inalienable rights of the human family to “freedom, justice and peace”. Climate change is an immense threat to these rights. Yet it is also a reminder that we are a single, interdependent human family sharing a common home on Planet Earth. The United Nations, and the values that underpin it, has a central role to play in providing a forum for dialogue, negotiation and action on climate change.
- 6 The Human Development Report 2007/2008 emphasizes that both mitigation and adaptation need to be addressed in order to truly fight climate change and the threats it poses to humanity.
- 7 The United Nations is best placed to take leadership in the fight against climate change. Climate change is exactly the kind of global challenge that the United Nations is best suited to address. This is why the Secretary-General has made it his personal priority to work with Member States to ensure that the United Nations plays its role to the full.

24 October 2007