**International Summit on Climate Change**

***Copenhagen, 16 December 2009***

**Speech of Mr. Jean Réveillon, EBU Director General**

Ladies and gentlemen:

I'm very glad to be here today and have the opportunity to tell you how public media can contribute to the debate on climate change and global warming. Before I start, I would like to thank Kevin Grose of the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/items/2627.php) (UNFCCC) and Cristina Bueti from ITU, for giving me the opportunity to speak at this high level panel of eminent personalities moderated by the Secretary General of ITU, Mr Touré.

I believe that it is extremely important that the media are active participants in this debate rather than simple spectators. Climate change awareness must grow and the media definitely have a major role to play in raising awareness and shaping public opinion.

As Albert Einstein once said, “*We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking, if mankind is to survive*”, and audiovisual communication is indeed a key factor in this process.

First of all, please allow me to give you a short introduction on the organization I represent:

The European Broadcasting Union represents 125 national media organizations in Europe, Russia, North Africa and the Middle East, and 43 associate Members further afield. Its Members reach an audience of 650 million people weekly.

The EBU represents its Members and promotes the values and distinctiveness of public service media in Europe and around the world.

The Eurovision and Euroradio networks deliver news, sports, events and music to EBU Members and other media organisations. Services to Members range from legal advice, technical standardisation and development to co-production and exchange of quality European content.

One of our shared goals is to be a source of impartial and independent information and to provide innovative, diverse, and educational content. It is part of our public service mission to do so across all media.

It is at the very heart of public service media and our shared values, to inform citizens about current affairs, and to provide balanced and independent reporting on the major issues of our times; such as global warming and climate change.

To address the issues of climate change, while politicians join forces, public service media have also taken action. We are striving to educate the public, and broaden their understanding of the need for collective action.

Furthermore, I believe that public service media especially have an important role to play in reclaiming “the truth” about climate change. The topic itself is very complex and often there is a lack of consensus about the real magnitude of the climate change problem. This makes it difficult to communicate impartial and accurate information on global warming.

We have to push ourselves beyond ‘the breaking news reporting’ system to inform the public about the facts as they are known, and help the public understand this complex issue.

Please allow me to mention three concrete examples of our activities towards climate change awareness:

[*"Public Enemy No. 1: Carbon"*](http://www.eurovisiontv.com/en/eurovisiontv/science_education/carbon.php) is an exclusive documentary on today’s carbon crisis coproduced by our Members and coordinated by the EBU, with the financial support of the EU Commission. It tells the complete story of carbon issues, delivers the latest facts from top scientists and negotiators, and provides solutions that can help **re-establish the global balance and** ultimately save our planet.

Our Members have screened the documentary in the run-up to or during this conference. For example, our French Member, France Télévisions, has successfully screened part of the documentary on France 3 while our Belgian Member, RTBF, will do so tomorrow. Furthermore, the European Commission has just organised a public screening of the documentary in Brussels.

The second example perhaps will ring a bell with some of you because *Once upon a time... Planet Earth* is the latest in a very well known *Once upon a time...* series created by Albert Barillé and already broadcast in more than 100 countries.

The 26-part series *Once upon a time… Planet Earth,* explains sustainable development to children in an entertaining way. It is intended to encourage younger viewers to become responsible citizens, giving them the knowledge to understand their environment, so that they can take action to protect it.

As it is an animated series, it speaks your language, the characters are multiethnic and the message is international.

In addition, at a UNESCO conference earlier this year, the EBU and the broadcasting unions from other regions, made a commitment to encourage their Members to increase the amount of content and programming on climate change by exchanging audiovisual material and broadcasting programmes. They also undertook to take measures to reduce their own carbon footprint.

One of our Members, the BBC, has already set itself a tough target: a 20 percent reduction in its electricity consumption per person in the work environment by 2012.

Referring to the fight against global warming, Al Gore once said “*We are the enemy, just as we have only ourselves as allies*.”

I hope this conference will agree on an effective successor to the Kyoto Protocol and ensure rapid and coordinated actions to ultimately win the war against ourselves.

Thank you.

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