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Joint Statement on Climate Change and Energy by President Bush and Australian Prime Minister John Howard

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Joint Statement on Climate Change and Energy by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon John Howard MP, and the President of the United States of America, the Hon George W. Bush

1. Prime Minister Howard and President Bush agreed today on the importance of confronting the interlinked challenges of climate change, energy security and clean development.
2. Australia and the United States are committed to working together to find effective solutions. They are working to ensure that the energy on which both economies depend remains reliable, affordable and secure by promoting efficiency and diversification of supply.
3. Australia and the United States have consistently championed the importance of practical action. The key to comprehensive global action on climate change is to ensure that measures to reduce emissions are consistent with economic growth, poverty alleviation and improvements in living standards.
4. Australia and the United States look forward to working actively and constructively with all countries at the UN Climate Change Conference in Indonesia in December, with a view to achieve a post-2012 agreement that provides for effective action from all the major emitting nations toward the UNFCCC objective of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The APEC Leaders' Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Security and Sustainable Development will be a significant step forward in efforts to forge a new international framework.
5. Australia welcomed the initiative by the United States to launch a series of meetings on future global action on climate change and looks forward to participating in the first Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change in Washington DC on 27-28 September 2007. Both countries believe this process will make a major contribution to the negotiation of a post-2012 framework.
6. Both countries highlighted that a key objective of the Major Economies Meeting would be to work toward a consensus on a long-term global goal for reducing emissions. Such a goal will provide a basis for accelerated and concerted action at the national and international level over the coming years. It underlines the importance of viewing action on climate change with a long-term perspective.
7. Together with appropriate policy tools, the development and deployment of low emission technologies will be a key element in addressing the climate change challenge in the medium- to longer-term. The Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate is a major initiative that was co-founded by Australia and the United States to drive technology cooperation. Working together, the six members - Australia, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States - have made substantial progress since the establishment of the Partnership in Sydney in January 2006. The Partnership has initiated more than 100 practical projects in the areas of clean fossil energy, aluminum, coal mining, renewable energy, power generation, cement, buildings and appliances, and steel.
8. Both countries agree that reducing emissions from deforestation is a key component of global action on climate change. The United States welcomed Australia's action in launching the Global Initiative on Forests and Climate, announced by Prime Minister Howard in March 2007, and was pleased to participate in the recent High-Level

Meeting in Sydney of 63 countries to take forward cooperation under the Initiative.

9. We also agreed to support multilateral action to liberalize trade in environmental goods and services.

10. Australia expressed its interest in participating in the Generation IV International Forum (GIF), which is a partnership of governments working on fourth generation nuclear power plant technology. The GIF reflects the common interest that many countries share in advanced research and development in this field. The United States expressed its support for Australian membership in the GIF.

11. In acknowledgment of the important contribution nuclear power can make in meeting energy needs and addressing the challenge of climate change, Australia and the United States agree on enhancing bilateral civilian nuclear cooperation and supporting the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). GNEP is a multilateral initiative the United States launched to expand the safe and secure use of zero-carbon emission nuclear energy worldwide. The United States welcomes Australia's participation in the Ministerial GNEP meeting to be held later this month in Vienna, Austria. The two countries also finalised a joint action plan for civil nuclear energy cooperation, including on research and development, regulatory issues, and skills and technical training.

12. Australia and the United States will continue to work closely to advance energy security and climate change issues internationally through other multilateral partnerships, including the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum, the Methane to Markets Partnership, the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership and the International Partnership for the Hydrogen Economy.

13. Important work has also been accomplished bilaterally under the auspices of the Australia-United States Climate Action Partnership and both countries are committed to further action. Progress has been made in the areas of climate change science and monitoring, agriculture and forestry, approaches to managing High Global Warming Potential Gases (synthetic greenhouse gases) and policy tools and approaches to addressing climate change.

14. We will also endeavor under the Montreal Protocol to ensure the recovery of the ozone layer to pre-1980 levels by accelerating the phase-out of HCFCs in a way that supports energy efficiency and climate change objectives. We will continue to exercise leadership in the development of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS).

15. The recently-concluded Australia-United States Agreement relating to Scientific and Technical Cooperation will promote collaboration between scientists in both countries on world-leading research and technology development, including in the area of climate change.

16. In recognition of the importance of global action on climate change and energy, the United States welcomes Australia's participation in the FutureGen International Partnership, a major United States-led international project aimed at building a prototype plant that integrates coal gasification and carbon capture and storage to produce electricity with near-zero emissions. This demonstrates and underscores the commitment of both countries to the development and deployment of clean coal technologies.

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