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MEDIA RELEASE

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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA TO HOST CLIMATE JUSTICE DIALOGUE

PRETORIA, South Africa – A high-level dialogue on Climate Justice will be held at the University of Pretoria, jointly with the Global Humanitarian Forum, on Saturday 28 February.

The event will be led by three key leaders from southern (Desmond Tutu), northern (Mary Robinson), and international (Kofi Annan) backgrounds. It aims to establish a set of guiding global principles for a just response to climate change.

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, Mary Robinson (former President of Ireland and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), and via video-link, Global Humanitarian Forum President, Kofi Annan (former UN Secretary-General) will interact with more than 250 students and faculty during the debate.

The Climate Justice Dialogue is intended to lend new impetus to an awareness of climate change and action for tackling it. The debate will focus on a series of Climate Justice Principles that the Forum has developed in collaboration with a range of civil society organizations.

“With the negotiations on a new global climate likely to replace the Kyoto Protocol at Copenhagen in December this year, 2009 will be critical for international action on climate change”, says Global Humanitarian Forum CEO, Walter Fust. “Climate justice must be the basis for the international community’s response to climate change.”

Climate Justice refers to the fact that much of the planet bears no responsibility for climate change, whereas the entire planet suffers its consequences. It is a striking injustice that the world’s poorest groups, who also pollute the least, suffer the most under climate change. “We live in a global village and we each have the responsibility to protect our planet. Pollution has a cost and it must be borne by the polluter”, maintains Forum President, Kofi Annan.

Prof Calie Pistorius, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Pretoria, says “Climate change disproportionately affects developing countries, and hence

we need strong leadership from people and politicians in the South. Students and academia will be a critical element of that sensitisation and mobilization process. The University of Pretoria is proud to be the co-host of this landmark debate.”

The event is taking place in the University’s Senate Hall (Hatfield Campus) from 14:00 to 15:30. The discussion will be moderated by Nisha Pillai of BBC World Television.

Later (at approximately 15:40), a press conference will take place in the Council Chambers (in the Administration Building of the University) where the panelists will discuss Climate Justice with the media.

Kofi Annan, founded the Global Humanitarian Forum in Geneva, together with the Swiss government in 2007, following his retirement as UN chief. The Forum is an independent and impartial international organization working to harness the full potential of the global society for overcoming key humanitarian concerns.

The Forum’s strategic focus is the human dimension of climate change.

Annan also recently announced a global partnership with French advertising group Havas’s agency Euro RSCG Worldwide. Euro RSCG joins further Forum collaborations with wide-ranging civil society partners to create a global movement for a decisive and equitable resolution to the climate crisis.

More information on the Global Humanitarian Forum and its activities can be found on <http://www.ghf-ge.org>

For more media information regarding the Global Humanitarian Forum and the Climate Justice, please contact:

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