

PRESS RELEASE



Leaders told 'Come together in fight for planet'

New Delhi: 22 September 2009

The Centre for Social Markets (CSM) today called on world leaders to come together in an historic show of leadership at the opening of the United Nations Climate Summit in New York. Speaking in a UN video message to world leaders, CSM founder and chief executive, Malini Mehra, said "To address this challenge, we will have to think differently. Not as nationalists but as a species. We will have to find a new political language to express solidarity as human beings in defence of our planet."

The UN Summit is an unprecedented gathering of more than 100 heads of state in advance of the General Assembly in New York. The meeting has been called by Secretary-General Ban-ki Moon to mobilize political will ahead of crucial climate change negotiations in Copenhagen in December. Leaders attending include Presidents Barack Obama, China's Hu Jintao, France's Nicholas Sarkozy, British Premier Gordon Brown and Japan's Yukio Hatoyama. India's Premier Manmohan Singh will be absent, and the country represented instead by Foreign Minister, SM Krishna, and 13-year old Lucknow schoolgirl, Yugratna Srivastava, speaking on behalf of the world's three billion children.

Momentum is rising across the world with an avalanche of actions by civil society on Monday's 'Global Wake Up Call' and recent statements by global business, investors, scientists and the medical community calling for deep and immediate cuts in global carbon emissions.

In an example of how high the stakes are, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), which includes India's neighbours Bangladesh and the Maldives, made a dramatic announcement yesterday calling for 'Island Survival' and a global warming limit of "1.5° C to stay alive".

In India the limit of 2° C has proved controversial. CSM's Malini Mehra said, "India must listen to what her neighbours are calling for. We have entered an era of consequences – inaction, complacency,

indecision will all have consequences. This is not the time for delay, this is the time to lead." Around the world organisations such as CSM have united in campaigns such as TCKTCKTCK to take action on climate change and demand a political response.

Mehra's said: "What we need is for political leaders - from every corner of the world - to be bold and courageous. To unite, rather than divide. To show vision and ambition. To take responsibility. At Copenhagen, they will be in the hot seat. They should know that if they are bold and decisive and show leadership, they can count on the rest of us - millions of us - to help them achieve the rest."

END

Note to Editors:

Malini Mehra's Video Message can be downloaded from the United Nations website at www.un.org/climatechange/2009summit and www.youtube.com/user/unitednations

The Centre for Social Markets (CSM) is an Indian NGO working to promote sustainability and climate leadership. Full details can be found on the CSM website: www.csmworld.org

CSM is leading a national campaign for climate leadership called 'Climate Challenge India' and runs the country's first climate portal at: www.climatechallengeindia.org

For details or press interviews, please contact: Malini Mehra, +91-99582 79627, or Pranav Sinha, +91-9899 180803