

EDITORIAL

With this issue, you have before you the second report of the results of the 61st Session of the UN General Assembly. Of the 254 resolutions, 54 are partially or completely relevant to our work... It is important, however, to recognise that resolutions are only paper until implemented. Other UN efforts, including the work of the Task Force on Reform of Technical and Advisory Service Agencies (see page 19), is focused on the effectiveness of international development support activities.

On page 2, you will see a photograph of Ban Ki-moon taking the oath of office as the new Secretary-General. Just prior to this ceremony, retiring SG Dr Kofi Annan, received numerous standing ovations reflecting sincere international gratitude for his contribution, inter alia, in focusing the world on the Millennium Development Goals. One of the last statements of his term was the announcement that Spain has contributed US\$700 million toward achieving these goals.

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Climate change continues to be a high-profile issue. The most recent report of the IPCC, unveiled in Paris, and the recent UN Climate Change meetings (see page 9) found that scientists are nearly in unison on this issue. The US's lengthening hesitation on this issue is even more incomprehensible. As many – Inuit peoples, island nations, etc. – face imminent threats from climate change, the US's unwillingness to join in (or even accept) efforts in this field may have disastrous consequences. Far from announcing comprehensive action, the Administration favours technical solutions to block sunlight (see Editorial 36/5), while basic measures such as emissions control are stalled.

Hope appears, however: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi recently called for “a new America that ... combats climate change”. Additional progress is found in the recent decision reconsidering the plan to close the US EPA's library system.

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The outgoing President of the European Parliament cited the new REACH programme for management of chemicals and contaminants as one of the most important achievements of his term.

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Finally, the Editorial to issue 36/6 contained two erroneous statements. First, the next issue will be numbered 2–3 (the double issue, on the 2nd International Elizabeth Haub Symposium). Issue 4, containing a report on the UNEP Governing Council, will be produced later this spring. Second, contrary to statements made, issue 36/6 did contain a detailed report on the Montreal Protocol's 18th MOP, written by Joanna Depledge with her customary excellence.

2 February 2007

- Wolfgang R. Steyer -