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**MESSAGE TO THE GERMAN UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION CEREMONY
HONORING DR. KLAUS TOEPFER
Bonn, 2 December 2005**

It gives me great pleasure to add my voice to this tribute to my good friend and colleague Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Well before joining the United Nations, Klaus compiled a long and impressive record of achievement in protecting the environment in Germany. Since joining my team in 1998, the United Nations has benefited greatly from his passion, energy, knowledge and ideas. He is one of the world's leading players in the uphill struggle to protect the global environment, combat climate change and usher in a new era of sustainable development – an era in which peace, security, economic development, social equity and environmental protection are inextricably linked.

The German United Nations Association has made a wise choice in awarding him this honorary medal in the name of my esteemed predecessor, Dag Hammarskjöld. Congratulations, Klaus; it has been my pleasure to work with you. Please accept my best wishes for a memorable evening.