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## **BRITISH EMBASSY - NEWS RELEASE**

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### **UK leads world with commitment to cut emissions by 80% by 2050**

The UK's Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband today announced that the UK will commit to cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 80% compared to 1990 levels by 2050, as a major contribution to a global deal on climate change.

The UK is one of the few European countries on track to meet its emissions reduction targets set under the Kyoto Treaty. Although responsible for just 2% of global greenhouse gas emissions, the UK plays a leading role on tackling climate change at the international level.

Working through the European Union, with G8 partners, and as part of the US Major Economies programme, the UK is committed to securing a long-term deal that commits all countries to reducing their emissions after 2012, when the Kyoto commitments will expire. The UK's key priority, shared with other European countries, is to secure the details of a deal at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009.

In a statement in the House of Commons, his first since being appointed to the newly-created Department of Energy and Climate Change, Mr Miliband [brother of British Foreign Secretary David Miliband]:

- said the Government would make the 80% target binding in law, by amending the Climate Change Bill currently going through the British Parliament.
- said that he plans to amend the Energy Bill, also currently before Parliament, to introduce a 'feed in tariff' supporting small scale renewable energy projects, and to make a further announcement soon on encouraging renewable heat.
- made clear that, unless energy companies demonstrate action to end overcharging for many customers on pre-payment energy meters, he was prepared to consult on legislation to end unfair pricing differentials.

Mr Miliband said:

"In tough economic times, some people will ask whether we should retreat from our climate change objectives. In our view, it would be quite wrong to row back, and those who say we should misunderstand the relationship between the economic and environmental tasks we face.

"And what we know from the Stern Report in 2006 is that the costs of not acting on climate change are greater than the costs of acting.

"The new department brings together the government's work on three long-term challenges that face our country: ensuring that we have energy that is affordable, secure, and sustainable; bringing about the transition to a low-carbon Britain; and achieving an international agreement on climate change at Copenhagen in December 2009.

"[Chair of the UK Government's Climate Change Committee] Lord Turner concluded that for Britain to play its proper part, the UK should cut our emissions not by 60% but by 80%. He concluded that the target should apply not just to CO2, but to all six of the Kyoto greenhouse gasses. And he concluded that while there are uncertainties about how to allocate emissions from international flights and shipping, they too should play their part in reducing emissions.

"Mr Speaker, the government accepts all of the recommendations of the Committee on Climate Change. We will amend the Climate Change Bill to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent by 2050, and that target will be binding in law. I hope all sides of the House will support this. Indeed, let me say I want to create as much of a consensus as we can on climate change."

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