

**SECRETARY-GENERAL PROPOSES APPOINTMENT OF ACHIM STEINER, CURRENTLY
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION, AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)**

Secretary-General Kofi Annan today proposed for election by the General Assembly, the appointment of Mr. Achim Steiner of Germany as Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for a four-year term.

Mr Steiner is currently the Director General of IUCN - The World Conservation Union – the world's largest environmental network with over 1,000 members including states, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations in 140 countries.

He has worked both at grassroots level and at the highest levels of international policy making to address the interface between environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic development.

His professional career has included assignments with governmental and non-governmental, as well as international organizations in different parts of the world. In Washington, where he was Senior Policy Advisor of IUCN's Global Policy Unit, he led the development of new partnerships between the environment community and the World Bank and United Nations system. In South-East Asia, he worked as Chief Technical Advisor on a programme for sustainable management of Mekong River watersheds and community-based natural resources management. In 1998, he was appointed Secretary General of the World Commission on Dams, based in South Africa - where he managed a global programme of work to bring together the public sector, civil society, and the private sector in a global policy process on dams and development.

In 2001, he was appointed Director General of the World Conservation Union, widely regarded as one of the most influential and highly respected organizations in the field of conservation, environment and natural resources management. As Chief Executive, he has held responsibility for the management and oversight of 1,000 staff located in 42 countries, implementing the Union's global work programme.

Mr. Steiner's professional career has taken him from working:

- at the grassroots level with a community-based organization in India
- through advisory positions on sustainable development with NGOs, public sector and international organizations in Germany, Pakistan, USA and Vietnam
- short-term assignments in Africa, Asia, Middle East, and the South Pacific
- to managing a regional conservation programme for IUCN in Southern Africa
- leading a global environmental policy initiative based in Washington DC, aimed at multilateral agencies
- to managing the international secretariats and work programmes of the World Commission on Dams and most recently of the World Conservation Union based in Gland, Switzerland

His professional track record in the fields of sustainable development policy and environmental management, his first-hand knowledge of civil society, governmental and international organizations, as well as his global experience spanning five continents make him an excellent choice to lead the United Nations Environment Programme.

Mr Steiner, a German national, was born in Brazil in 1961 where he lived for ten years. His educational background includes a BA from the University of Oxford as well as an MA from the University of London with specialization in development economics, regional planning, and international development and environment policy. He also studied at the German Development Institute in Berlin as well as the Harvard Business School.

Mr. Steiner serves on a number of international advisory boards, including the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) and the Environmental Advisory Council (ENVAC) of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).