

Press release – for immediate release

Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize winner supports voice of future generations

World Future Council welcomes Wangari Maathai as an Honorary Councillor

Hamburg/London, 29th July 2009. The winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Prof. Wangari Muta Maathai, has joined the World Future Council (WFC) as a new Honorary Councillor. WFC Founder Jakob von Uexkull said: “We are very happy that Prof. Maathai has shown this appreciation for our work. Her knowledge and contacts will be especially helpful when developing our activities in Africa.” Working to act as ‘voice of future generations’ the WFC is committed to identifying and promoting best policy solutions internationally.

Wangari Maathai has been very active for the last 30 years in fighting for sustainable and just ecological, economic, social and cultural developments in her native Kenya and throughout Africa. “When identifying a problem, I always think about possible solutions. I do not like to talk too much about problems”, said the environmental and women’s rights activist in an interview with the magazine ‘Zenith’

In 1977 the biologist founded the reforestation project ‘The Green Belt Movement’ in order to fight for the preservation of forests in eastern Africa. Today the organisation is active in 13 African countries and more than 30 million trees have been planted. From 1976 to 1987 Wangari Maathai also made a name for herself as the leader of the National Council of Women in Kenya. She still is a board member of the organisation.

As early as 1984 Wangari Maathai received the Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Nobel Prize) for her work within the ‘Green Belt Movement’. Exactly 20 years later she was the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, for her commitment to “sustainable development, peace and democracy”. In 2006 she was awarded the Légion d’honneur, the highest honour in France, by President Jacques Chirac.

The WFC also warmly welcomes a second new member of the Honorary Council, Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor of Hirsohima, who is moving from the Council due to his high workload. Alongside Dr. Herlind Gundelach, Dr. Michael Otto, Arthur N.R. Robinson, Prof. Dr. Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker and Prof. Wangari Maathai he will support the WFC with guidance and advice. Honorary Councillor Walter Cronkite died on July 17th at the age of 92 in New York.

World Future Council:

The World Future Council brings the interests of future generations to the centre of policy making. Its 50 eminent members from around the globe have already successfully promoted change. The Council addresses challenges to our common future and provides decision-

makers with effective policy solutions. In-depth research underpins advocacy work for international agreements, regional policy frameworks and national lawmaking and thus produces practical and tangible results.

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