



Organisation météorologique mondiale
World Meteorological Organization

**WMO Statement at the ceremony marking the
closure of celebrations for the 50th anniversary
of the UNESCO Intergovernmental
Oceanographic Commission**

M. Jarraud
Secretary-General

(Paris, France, 22 June 2011)

TEMPS WEATHER
CLIMAT CLIMATE
EAU WATER

A faint, light blue background graphic featuring a globe with latitude and longitude lines, a compass rose, and laurel branches on either side, centered behind the text.

**WMO STATEMENT AT THE CEREMONY MARKING THE CLOSURE OF
CELEBRATIONS FOR THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
UNESCO INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION**

by

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Excellencies,

Ms Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General,

Mr Javier Valladares, IOC Chairman,

Ms Wendy Watson-Wright, IOC Executive Secretary,

Distinguished Representatives of UNESCO/IOC Members and Partner Organizations,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to represent the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) at the twenty-sixth session of the UNESCO/IOC Assembly and, in particular, at this ceremony marking the closure of the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

The origins of the long and fruitful partnership between our organizations can be traced back to the 1950s, when UNESCO and WMO launched a rapidly expanding collaboration in the domain of oceanography. Some years later, in 1960, the UNESCO General Assembly adopted its historic Resolution establishing a new intergovernmental structure to further facilitate international coordination and research in the oceanic and marine sciences and services.

The IOC quickly evolved to become WMO's key partner in many scientific and technical activities closely related to the maritime and/or oceanic components of our Organization's mandate, amongst which I would especially like to mention the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS).

I would also like to recall that, in 1999, WMO and IOC established their Joint Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology, in particular to coordinate international marine meteorological and oceanographic services and the supporting observational, data management and capacity building programmes, including the previous responsibilities of the WMO Commission for Marine Meteorology (CMM) and the Joint IOC/WMO Committee for the Integrated Global Ocean Services System (IGOSS).

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

For millennia, the world's oceans and seas have been essential to transportation and commerce. They are also a major component of the global climate system, and they contribute to sustain a large percentage of the Earth's population and a substantial share of its biodiversity.

Meteorological and oceanographic data and services are accordingly vital for the protection and rational exploitation of the global ocean and coasts, which are especially vulnerable to extreme events and climate change, as well as to marine pollution and overexploitation.

Beyond the innovative approach in operational oceanography and marine meteorology, JCOMM has been a model of cooperation between oceanographers and meteorologists.

The Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC, co-sponsored by WMO, states that some weather events and extremes are likely to become even more frequent and/or more intense during the current century. The Report also brings into focus the potential impacts of sea-level rise on many coastal regions and lowlands, for which appropriate marine services will be vital. Too many vivid memories of the loss of lives and property are associated with tsunamis, storm surges and extreme waves related to severe tropical and extra-tropical cyclones impacting upon heavily populated low-lying areas, so the prospect of climate change-enhanced impacts on highly-vulnerable areas is of special concern.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thanks to our increasing understanding of ocean and atmospheric processes and their coupled effects, as well as to unprecedented increase in computational capabilities, we are on the verge of an exciting new era. As you know, the Sixteenth World Meteorological Congress, which recently met in Geneva, has launched the decisive phase for the establishment of a Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), a key course of action which formally began in 2009 with the third World

Climate Conference (WCC-3), in which UNESCO/IOC also had a major role. We expect UNESCO and its IOC to be key WMO partners in the development of the GFCS.

I would also like to inform you that the WMO Congress congratulated JCOMM for the recent enlargement to the Arctic of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), and that it underscored the importance of expanding Tsunami Early Warning Systems coverage to those areas at risk still lacking appropriate protection. Furthermore, the Congress noted the critical importance of protecting all ocean observation and marine scientific research platforms, as well as the key contribution of their data to the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), which WMO is happy to co-sponsor.

In concluding, I would like to express WMO's congratulations and its appreciation to UNESCO and its IOC, for our exemplary collaboration of over 50 years in oceanography and marine meteorology.

Thank you.
