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MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT

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Joint press release by the Max Planck Society and Siemens

Science, governments and business working together to meet the challenges of our time
Future Dialogue – An international conference of leading experts and decision-makers in Berlin on October 26

Mastering the most urgent challenges of the 21st century will require close cooperation between the scientific community, governments and business. For this reason, the Max Planck Society and Siemens have invited prominent scientists, policymakers and business leaders from around the world to Berlin to take part in the Future Dialogue conference. The aim of the event, which is being organized in cooperation with *The Economist*, is to provide answers to the question: How can science, business and governments cooperate to solve the problems caused by climate change, shifting demographics and increasing urbanization?

"What we need above all is knowledge about global connections and changes," underscores Professor Peter Gruss, President of the Max Planck Society. "For example, if we don't understand the factors associated with climate change, we won't be able to respond with appropriate policies or technologies. Take today's climate models, for instance. Unlike their predecessors, they are not merely extended weather forecasts. The latest models take into account factors such as the carbon balance of the terrestrial and marine biospheres. Max Planck scientists have made major contributions in this area." Targeted research expenditures have an enormous impact over the long term, providing tremendous impetus for a country's innovative strength and economic clout. Siemens President and CEO Peter Löscher noted, "Siemens will play a pioneering role in cooperating with governments and the scientific community to master the tremendous challenges ahead, particularly during times of economic crisis. Whether we're talking about the intelligent energy networks of the future or technologies for environmental and climate protection, healthcare or electromobility, Siemens will accelerate the development and marketing of solutions that address the entire array of challenges."

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At the Future Dialogue conference, leading scientists and political and economic decision-makers will join a select international audience to discuss current constraints to cooperation between the scientific community, business and governments. During various panel sessions, participants will explore new ways to foster cooperation and consider what kind of framework governments and society must provide to facilitate this process. More than 300 senior business leaders, scientists and policymakers are expected to participate, including Dennis L. Meadows, co-author of *The Limits to Growth*; Joschka Fischer, Germany's former Minister of Foreign Affairs; Lord Nicholas Stern, who examines climate change from an economic point of view; Khaled Awad, Director of Masdar City, a planned "zero-emissions" city; and U.S. star architect and urban planner Daniel Libeskind. The opening address will be delivered by Meadows, who is also from the U.S.

The event will be a forum for discussing crucial issues such as global warming, the provision of improved healthcare worldwide and increasing urbanization. As Peter Gruss notes, "Independent basic research is the indispensible cornerstone for the development of innovative solutions – because truly new products and processes cannot be generated from old knowledge. More in-depth knowledge and a better understanding of the processes of nature are the foundation for future innovations. For example, if we understand how plants adapt to unfavorable environmental conditions such as overly saline soils or droughts, we can apply our knowledge of these characteristics to crops, helping safeguard food supplies for the nine billion people who will inhabit the earth in the future."

However, if innovative approaches are to be turned into reality. a positive awareness must be cultivated in society. How can the ongoing support of governments and the general public be secured as we tackle the challenges ahead? This is one of the questions that will be addressed at the conference during three parallel sessions in the afternoon. Sustainable success can be achieved only if society, the scientific community and high-level policymakers all support innovation – and its translation into marketable solutions. As Siemens CEO Löscher remarked, "The international cooperation during the financial and economic crisis has impressively demonstrated the global community's capacity for concerted action when addressing a major challenge. We must make every effort to follow this encouraging example of worldwide cooperation among representatives of business, science and government as we join forces to overcome the tremendous challenges ahead. Fundamental research and its translation into innovative, marketable technologies and products must go hand-in-hand," stated Löscher. There are already impressive examples of how scientists, business leaders and policymakers can cooperate to help turn innovations into marketable products. That's why the various discussion forums at the Future

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Dialogue conference will focus not only on analyzing the status quo but also on providing realistic, forward-looking answers to the most urgent questions of the 21st century.

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The **Max Planck Society** (MPG) is Germany's most renowned research organisation. It was founded in 1948 as the successor organisation to the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, which had been in existence since 1911. Today, the Max Planck Society operates 80 institutes and research facilities, as well as 54 graduate schools in cooperation with universities. More than 20,400 people work and carry out research at the Max Planck Society, including 4,900 scientists. Every year, 12,000 junior scientists and guest scientific researchers contribute to the work of the institutes. Max Planck Institutes are regarded as among the best research institutes worldwide because they produce internationally outstanding fundamental research and also excellent scientists - and both with an efficient use of resources. The Max Planck Society's budget for 2009 amounts to €1.3 billion. Further information can be found on the Max Planck Society's website at www.mpg.de.

Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global powerhouse in electronics and electrical engineering, operating in the industry, energy and healthcare sectors. The company has around 410,000 employees (in continuing operations) working to develop and manufacture products, design and install complex systems and projects, and tailor a wide range of solutions for individual requirements. For over 160 years, Siemens has stood for technical achievements, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality. In fiscal 2008, Siemens had revenue of €77.3 billion and a net income of €5.9 billion (IFRS). Further information is available on the Internet at: www.siemens.com.

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