

**Statement of Iceland at the Founding Conference of IRENA
Bonn, 26 January, 2009**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Allow me first of all to thank the government of Germany and the city of Bonn for hosting this important event – and the German government for its highly valued initiative in preparing and facilitating the founding of the International Renewable Energy Agency.

Energy security is crucial to sustainable development and world peace. A steady development of alternative, clean and renewable energy sources will benefit all and help us reach a global agreement on limits to carbon emissions. Further investments in environmentally friendly, clean energy resources are needed as well as transfer of technology.

IRENA has a vital role to play. It is not meant to be an exclusive club of economically developed countries but a forum for all United Nations member states to work together on developing, sharing and transferring technologies and know-how – and thus benefitting earth's climate and the world's economy.

It is important that participation in IRENA is general and worldwide from the beginning if ambitious goals are to be met. The European Union aim of at least 20 percent of energy consumption coming from renewable sources by the year 2020 is to be commended.

Iceland has fully supported the idea of this agency and we are proud to be among signatory states here today. As a country with more than eighty percent of its energy consumption coming from renewable resources, mainly geothermal and hydropower, Iceland has a considerable experience and technical know-how that can benefit the world, not least developing countries. Economically exploitable geothermal resources are available in many areas, including developing countries, and may be a major renewable energy resource for well over 50 countries.

Iceland has a long-standing commitment to international cooperation on the sustainable use of energy. The Geothermal Department of the United Nations University, hosted by Iceland, has for many years been a valuable tool for the sharing of technological expertise and experiences with developing countries.

We are confident that IRENA will become an effective platform for further development of the energy of the future.

Thank you.