

Message from Agustín Carstens, Secretary of Public Finance and Credit, Mexico



"OECD Forum 2008 takes place in the midst of challenging economic conditions, including downturns in some markets, rising food prices, and an urgent need to develop a more climate-conscious global economy. The Forum is an important opportunity to exchange views in a candid environment and to develop some new ideas about collaboration among OECD member countries (and about their assistance to non-OECD countries as well) towards building a path of strong and sustainable global growth. In addressing collective approaches, we need to give priority to those who are most vulnerable to these adverse effects, such as low-income households which are struggling with rising food costs.

This year's discussions on climate change are intended to explore future alternatives for the cooperative international action.

This will include designing and implementing suitable strategies to mitigate its impact, providing future generations with more favorable environment standards to increase their well-being, and assisting those nations that are most vulnerable to climate risks. The risks and anticipated damages from changes in climate — which are no longer possible to fully avert — fall disproportionately on developing countries and the poorest communities. Therefore, a collective international action can no longer focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions only — it must include both effective mitigation, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and customized assistance for those in greatest need.

OECD Ministers carry an important responsibility to build sustainable economies at the national and global level. It is becoming increasingly clear that the cost of inaction will be higher than the cost of transforming our economies along low carbon growth strategies and reducing vulnerability of those who will be hit the hardest and the earliest. We owe it to present and future generations to act now — nationally, internationally, and across the development divide.

The OECD Forum 2008 is an excellent opportunity to stimulate an open and dynamic discussion. I am certain that its outcome will be as fruitful as it has been in the past events. I am looking forward to exchanging views with all of you and working towards identifying possible solutions."