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## ***COP13 Opening Press Conference***

***Wednesday, 6 September, 13:30-14:15hrs***  
***Press Conference Room: Rio Conventions Pavilion***

***UNCCD Executive Secretary Monique Barbut***

### **Talking points**

- ***Good afternoon everyone. We are delighted to be in China because this is the first Conference hosted by China out of the three Rio Conventions – on biological diversity and Climate Change. It is also my pleasure to welcome you to this 13th session of our Conferences.***
  - i. ***I'd like to share the [four](#) key expected outcomes for us and why each of these outcomes matter***



### **Outcome 1. New Strategic Plan for 2018-2030**

*i) This Conference is expected to adopt a new strategy for 2018-2030. This new strategy is stronger and better because it has a concrete target – land degradation neutrality – to be achieved by 2030. And the target has indicators to measure change. The LDN target provides an organizing principle that we can all rally behind and achieve a specific change.*

*ii) Why does this matter?*

*The UNCCD is the global custodian of this target and there is now a new sense of purpose and common cause. Of the 169 countries that declared in 2013 that they are affected by land degradation or drought, 110 have signed up to the LDN Target Setting Programme.*

### **Outcome 2: Drought mitigation as a strategic area of action**

*We hope that from this Conference, drought will become an area of **strategic area of focus** for the Convention. The future projections of drought by the IPCC show that droughts will become more intense and more frequent. The recent drought in Southern Africa led to what was declared one of the worst humanitarian crises since the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war. It affected 25 million people who lost everything. Droughts are becoming stronger all over the world, even in Latin America, and in my own country, France, we were affected by drought for the first time this year. As a result of this Conference, we hope that countries will become **well-prepared** for the future.*

### **Outcome 3: Launch of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund**

*We realized when we set up the target that it is a challenge to have a target when you do not have the finance to achieve your target. And often we only think about public finance. But we also have private finance. And so we have set up the LDN Fund which will be managed by the private sector. This is the largest fund that will deal with land issues and it will be launched next Tuesday. So I hope to see you there on Tuesday, after the High-level segment closes.*

### **Outcome 4: Taking action on Emerging Issues**

*i) **Sand and Dust Storms***

*As you know, the issue of Sand and Dust storms, has huge economic consequences in the countries that it affects. But it is also a complex issue to*



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*fight because the origin of sand and dust storms may be in a different country. So it has important political consequences. If we don't take action quickly the cost of managing it can spiral out of control.*

***(ii) Gender Equality: Land Rights***

*As you know, in many parts of the world women are active in agriculture, but in many countries their rights to land are not addressed. So we hope that at this Conference the Parties will address this question.*

***iv) Distress Migration, security and Conflict***

*The final issue is to take a step and look at the links between land degradation, migration and conflict. In China, this issue may not be visible, but in huge parts of Africa, we can draw maps that show that the countries with desertification also have the most conflicts, or food insecurity or radicalization, and are prone to conflict. A recent study, shows that more 60 million people would be have to move anyway by 2045 because of desertification.*

*In conclusion, the Convention is very important because it's the convention that touches the lives of the most vulnerable people. Perhaps that's why it doesn't interest the rich. But history has shown before and will always show that you are never immune to the sickness of the poor. So this Convention isn't just an environmental convention but a political and social economic one.*