News Release

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

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World’s Largest Brainstorm Opens at Critical Moment for Global Economy

10 October 2011

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Arabic version

- The international community should move quickly to find collaborative approaches to prevent a serious downturn and counter rising protectionism, former British prime minister Gordon Brown warned.
- The Summit on the Global Agenda 2011, the world’s biggest brainstorm, opens in Abu Dhabi.
- The Summit aims to identify new models for addressing the most pressing global challenges.
- More information about the Summit is available here: www.weforum.org/AbuDhabi2011

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 10 October 2011 – Governments, businesses and civil society must work together to address urgent global issues such as the slowdown in the economy if the world is to avoid another major crisis, government leaders warned in the opening session of the World Economic Forum’s Summit on the Global Agenda 2011. “Global cooperation is even more necessary today because we are facing a new but avoidable global downturn,” said former British prime minister Gordon Brown, Member of Parliament of the United Kingdom. “At the moment, there is a precarious balance between those who produce but don’t consume and those who consume but don’t produce.” The international community needs to negotiate a “global growth pact” and guard against rising protectionism, Brown argued.

The Summit on the Global Agenda, the world’s largest brainstorm, brings together more than 800 of the most influential thought leaders from business, government, academia and civil society to address 79 of the most pressing global challenges. Meeting in Global Agenda Councils organized by the World Economic Forum, the experts will be discussing new models for approaching their respective issues. Their recommendations will contribute to shaping the agenda for the Forum’s next Annual Meeting in Davos-Klosters in January 2012 and provide input for the G20 consultations that the Forum is holding with the government of France, the current G20 chair, and will be conducting with Mexico, which takes over the G20 chair next year.

“The nature of the issues we face today is such that no nation can address them alone,” said H.E. Sultan Bin Saeed AlMansoori, Minister of Economy of the United Arab Emirates and Co-Chair of the Summit on the Global Agenda 2011. “In today’s interconnected world, events in one country can have significant impact on others.”

Problems such as maritime piracy and food security require collaborative approaches to solve them, H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, agreed. “These challenges require the development of new models.” Added H.E Mohammed Omar Abdulla, Undersecretary of the Department of Economic Development, Abu Dhabi, speaking on behalf of H.E Nasser Ahmed Alsowaidi, Chairman, Department of Economic Development, Abu Dhabi who is a Summit Co-Chair: “While each nation must determine its own way of doing things at home, when it comes to emerging national challenges, we need to think long term. On issues like climate change and geopolitical security, we have to consider not just our immediate situation but those of the next generation and the one after that.”

Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, told participants that the world needs “new models to guide global, regional, national and business decision-making.” He concluded: “Our responsibility is not to look at the world in a short-sighted way but to break out and look for a systemic and more collaborative way.”

Later, in another session, Schwab demonstrated to Members of the Global Agenda Councils the Forum’s new Web-based platform Topline, which will allow the Councils and all the Forum’s Members and Communities to interact with each other and conduct their brainstorming online.

Notes to Editors
The **host broadcaster** for the Summit is Abu Dhabi Media Company.
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