

WEDNESDAY, 26 JANUARY 2011

UNCCD – GRF SPECIAL EVENT ON E-DLDD

WELCOME ADDRESS

Dr. Walter J. Ammann, GRF Davos

Dear Executive Secretary of UNCCD and co-host of the today's event, Luc Gnacadja

Dear Margareta Wahlström, Director UNISDR

Dear Councillor Engler

Esteemed speakers and guests

Dear Colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me – also from my-behalf – welcome you very warmly in this beautiful and historical room here in Davos – a room, as you just have learned from Councillor Engler, that dates back to the 16th century, and with Davos as a settlement starting officially already in 1289 (– two years before the starting date of Switzerland.)

A special welcome and a special thank goes to Luc Gnacadja who travelled from Bonn this morning to Davos and who has to fly to New York this evening.

I am extremely pleased that today we have a chance to be first-hand informed on the socio-economic consequences of desertification, land degradation and drought and to discuss it from different perspectives.

Land degradation and desertification , one of the most important environmental, man-made risks which goes hand in hand with climate change and loss in biodiversity and which is one of the root causes for migration, for decreasing food security, for water scarcity, and many more subsequent consequences.

Land degradation and desertification to be seen as one of the most important emerging risks, a slow-onset risk, unfortunately still recognized only to some degree as a global problem and not just one of arid regions.



“From Thoughts to Action”

May this event contribute to a better understanding of the complex interrelations and to raise awareness for a much more global perspective - thus supporting UNCCD in combatting desertification, land degradation and drought.

The Global Risk Forum GRF Davos is of course very pleased to be able to contribute to broader awareness and understanding be it with this event, be it with further collaborative efforts, together with UNCCD. To combat land degradation needs a global collaborative effort, it is an important matter of concern for the developing countries but also for the industrialized world, a matter for the public but also for the private sector.

Only together – we will make things happen!

Davos, 26 January 2011

Walter J. Ammann