



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **European regions and local authorities ahead on climate change and development cooperation**

*La Rábida, Andalucía (E), 27 May 2010.*

In a conference of the Assembly of European Regions (AER) in Andalusia to share experiences and innovative practices, it became clear that the prevention and adaptation to the challenges posed by climate change are tackled in regions and municipalities, not only in Europe but globally. The conference gathered around 90 representatives - including members of 'Platforma', a network of local and regional authorities for development - with first hand experience in this field.

Indeed, regions develop efficient solutions as they are responsible for the implementation of policies linked to climate change, notably infrastructure, transport, agriculture, environment, disaster risk management and aggregation systems for agriculture. *"Therefore, AER, which is member of 'Platforma', will lobby to achieve the multilevel democratic governance that needs to be put into practice. The climate change issue makes it necessary for all public stakeholders - Europe, States, regions and local authorities - to work closely together. If we reach this goal, our continent will prove to the whole world that a grown up joint approach to climate change can defeat this urgent and very real threat"* said **Kenneth Backgård**, President of the AER energy group and Councillor of Norrbotten (S).

*"Andalucía was one of the first Spanish and probably European regions to tackle climate change. We began the fight in 2002. In 2007, we made an ambitious prevention plan, and have already fulfilled 92% of our commitments. But we can not be complacent, there is still a lot to do, and our joint work improves the outcomes"* said **José Juan Díaz Trillo**, Environment Minister of Andalucía. *"Our meeting is also important as it will allow us to help the poorest countries in the world. Of course we are all facing a time of economic hardships, but I'm convinced this might create opportunities. Together we will find them"* he concluded.

Participants stressed the need to raise awareness on climate change and underlined that investments in green technologies, while painful in the short term, will eventually bare the fruits of the much sought after sustainable development our planet is craving.

*The **Assembly of European Regions (AER – aer.eu)** is the largest independent network of regions in wider Europe. Bringing together more than 270 regions from 33 countries and 16 interregional organisations, AER is the political voice of its members and a forum for interregional co-operation.*

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