

**Communications Environmental Excellence (CEEI) Initiative/Environmental
Charter**

Télébec Signing Ceremony, Montreal, 12 October 2000

Remarks by Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of UNEP, the United Nations Environment Programme, I welcome this opportunity to congratulate a new signatory to the North American environmental charter and new member of the Communications Environmental Excellence Initiative (CEEI). As you are aware, UNEP's Regional Office for North America has been an active participant in the creation of this initiative and it is good to see its impact growing.

At UNEP's annual consultative meeting with industry associations, held in Paris last month and attended by more than 40 industry associations from various countries and sectors, participants emphasised the role associations should play to catalyse change towards sustainability. It is heartening to see the CEEI playing such a role.

We in UNEP are also pleased to see the partnership growing and building on the important work that has been done in North America through its charter and in Europe through the environmental charter of the European Telecommunication Network Operators (ETNO). We therefore also look forward to welcoming *Télébec* to our Global Telecoms Initiative, for which we are meeting here in Montreal this week.

In all our work with voluntary initiatives (and we have them in many sectors: banks, insurance, tourism...), we constantly see the importance of involving companies of all sizes and from all parts of the world. It is clear, for example, that medium and smaller size companies world-wide account for a large percentage of economic activity and have a major environmental impact.

The importance of expanding the global scope of our initiatives is underlined yet again by the Global Compact Initiative of the UN Secretary-General. Let me remind you that in Davos in 1999, Kofi Annan called upon business leaders to abide by three sets of universally recognised principles: human rights, labour rights, Rio principles for environment protection. Indeed, in a globalising world economy, we need global involvement and a greater sense of global corporate citizenship. The Global Compact provides a UN-sponsored platform for encouraging and promoting good corporate practices and learning experiences in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment. It sets a frame of reference for industry initiatives as well as regional and government-led efforts.

As one of the three key UN agencies responsible for the Global Compact, UNEP will continue to catalyse voluntary initiatives which encourage decision-makers to adopt policies, strategies and practices that are cleaner and safer, make efficient use of natural resources, reduce pollution and risks for humans and the environment, and incorporate environmental costs. We welcome the involvement of *Télébec* in this endeavour. Think globally, act locally. This is our slogan.

Thank you.