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***Statement given by Didier Coulomb,
Director General of the International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR)***

Refrigeration, including air conditioning, heat pumps and cryogenics, is essential to human health as it helps preserve the quality of foodstuffs (“cold chain”) as well as drugs and other health products, and supply a liveable built environment.

However, refrigeration has an impact on the natural environment also: it accounts for 7.8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. 37% are due to the emission of fluorinated gases used as refrigerants in refrigeration systems and 63% are indirect emissions due to the consumption of energy by these systems.

The positive effects of the cold chain outweigh the negative effects: the greenhouse effect caused by the production and transport of lost foodstuffs due to lack of a cold chain, is higher than that caused by the refrigeration systems of the cold chain. Nevertheless, it is our duty to minimize the negative impact.

Significant progress has already been made both in eliminating the fluorinated refrigerants having the highest greenhouse effect (chlorofluorocarbons in particular) and in terms of energy efficiency. The adoption of the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol in 2016 will further reduce direct emissions from refrigeration systems. But it is also up to governments and all actors in the energy, construction, and transport businesses to support our efforts in order to use less carbon-based energy (solar cooling ...) and reduce the energy consumption of refrigeration facilities.

The International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR) has been involved in numerous initiatives to promote sustainable refrigeration systems around the world, through its scientific conferences, publications and international network of experts. The IIR provides science-based, objective, practical and up to date information and expertise on the possible or future technologies and their potential use in all the fields of refrigeration.

The IIR is at your disposal. Thank you.