



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
PR- 247-08  
June 26, 2008

## **MAYOR BLOOMBERG, NEW YORK CITY GLOBAL PARTNERS AND COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY HOST URBAN PUBLIC HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT**

*Mayor and Nobel Prize-winner Rajendra Pachauri address officials from 30 cities at Columbia; Mayor Cites New Study Linking Sustainable Development to Improved Public Health;*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and New York City Global Partners, together with Columbia University, today began a two-day international meeting of government officials and policymakers from 30 cities to address urban public health issues related to global warming. The "Public Health and Climate Change: The Urban Policy Connection" summit commenced today at Columbia University, and continues tomorrow, Friday, June 27, at City Hall. The summit began with a keynote address by Mayor Bloomberg, followed by two panel discussions on responses to urban public health challenges caused by climate change with public officials from Sao Paulo, New York, Toronto, Mexico City and Copenhagen. The luncheon speaker was Rajendra K. Pachauri, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a co-recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. In the afternoon, as well as on Friday morning, invited participants shared their expertise and experiences in developing and implementing integrated plans for addressing the urban public health consequences of climate change. In his keynote remarks at Columbia's Low Library, Mayor Michael Bloomberg emphasized the responsibility of the world's cities to address global warming even when national governments fail to act, asserting that there are critical connections linking efforts to control climate change to public health.

"The measures our cities take to shrink our carbon footprints have the additional, and in many cases immediate, benefit of dramatically improving the health of our citizens," Mayor Bloomberg said. "A major new white paper based on research by our City's Department of Health, Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability and Columbia University presents data on two of the most serious problems that are increasing in urban areas - air pollution and urban sprawl."

Climate and public health experts at the Columbia, many of whom are working closely with New York City agencies on climate change strategies as part of the Bloomberg administration's PlaNYC, led a number of the discussions during the summit. The University's longstanding leadership in climate and environmental science makes it a natural partner of a Mayor's Office that has made long-term sustainability a key focus of policy and planning.

"We're grateful to Mayor Bloomberg and his team for joining with us again to discuss an issue on which he and his administration have truly been global leaders," said Columbia Senior Executive Vice President Robert Kasdin. "With events like these, and with the ongoing contributions by our faculty and researchers to policymaking for New York, we are fulfilling both our own mission to use our intellectual and scientific expertise in addressing the vital questions facing our society - and also Mayor Bloomberg's vision of a sustainable future for our city and for the world."

"The purpose of New York City Global Partners is to forge relationships among the world's great cities

and to promote cooperation by sharing best practices," said New York City Global Partners President, Meyer Feldberg, professor and dean emeritus at Columbia's Business School. "Through Global Partners the leadership of the world's great cities has the opportunity to work together on their common agendas to ensure they will continue to be places that promote innovations in sustainability and improve public health."

Thursday's summit also served as the launch of the Global Partners Innovation Exchange Web site. This online resource will showcase best practices in the governance of global cities on a wide range of issues. The Web site targets policymakers and practitioners in cities around the world.

"Learning from other cities and sharing our best practices is just the kind of activity that strengthens New York City," said Marjorie B. Tiven, Commissioner of the City Commission for the United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol and Treasurer of Global Partners.

This summit was produced by New York City Global Partners, Inc., and Columbia University in partnership with two New York City agencies, the Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability (Director Rohit Aggarwala) and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Commissioner Thomas Frieden). Generous support for the summit was provided by Columbia University, AIG, Deutsche Bank, and Pfizer Inc.

#### *About New York City Global Partners, Inc.*

New York City Global Partners, Inc. connects the City of New York with other global cities. The mission is to support the work of the Mayor's office in seeking creative solutions to municipal problems by sharing innovative programs and policies through conferences of high level policy makers and elected officials, site visits and internet exchanges. Formerly known as the Sister City Program of the City of New York, Global Partners was created in 2006 with a more flexible structure to facilitate interaction with additional global cities. The mission of Global Partners is advanced through the convening of summits, the online Innovation Exchange, and Global Partners Junior. New York City Global Partners is based in the office of the New York City Commission for the United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol, part of the Mayor's office. It is an apolitical, non-profit, charitable, and educational 501(c)(3) organization. It is supported by private contributions and governed by a board of directors. To learn more about New York City Global Partners, Inc., please visit [www.nyc.gov/globalpartners](http://www.nyc.gov/globalpartners) or call 3-1-1.

#### *Leadership in Environment and Climate Research at Columbia University*

Columbia University has established itself as a global center of pioneering research and innovation in climate science. Columbia researchers have achieved historic breakthroughs in understanding the complex forces affecting our environment and their impact on society. The breadth of Columbia centers working on the many aspects of climate change include the University's Earth Institute and Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, the Lenfest Center for Sustainable Energy and the Center for Environmental Research and Conservation. The University also recently launched the Columbia Climate Center to provide a hub for researchers whose work span diverse fields including hydrology, oceanography, geophysics, economics, engineering and public health. Columbia is committed to training future environmental leaders through more than 24 academic programs in earth science and sustainability. To learn more about Columbia's breadth of research and education in climate science and environmental sustainability, please visit [www.columbia.edu/cu/news/climate/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/news/climate/)

#### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Stu Loeser / Jason Post (212) 788-2958; Clare Oh (Columbia University) (212) 854-5479