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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE OZONE LAYER
16 September 2014**

Just over a quarter century ago, the world united to reverse the rapid depletion of the atmospheric ozone layer, which protects Earth from harmful radiation from space. Today, the ozone layer is well on track to recovery within the next few decades.

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer is widely recognized as one of the most successful environmental treaties in history. It establishes legally binding controls on the national production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances, and enjoys universal ratification by 197 parties.

Recent scientific findings reveal the importance of the Montreal Protocol. Without the Protocol and associated agreements, atmospheric levels of ozone-depleting substances could have increased ten-fold by 2050. Concerted action has prevented millions of cases of skin cancer.

The Protocol has also significantly contributed to the fight against climate change, as many ozone-depleting substances are powerful greenhouse gases. Climate change is affecting communities, economies and ecosystems across the globe. It is essential that we act to mitigate the threat with the same unity of purpose as we have in facing the dangers of ozone depletion.

Let us take inspiration from our efforts to preserve the ozone layer. The Montreal Protocol has shown that decisive action by the international community, including the private sector, can achieve transformative results for the common good. Let us learn from this example and apply its lesson to the urgent task of addressing the climate challenge.