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Closing Remarks

**Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson
Global Environment Facility**

**4th GEF Assembly
Punta del Este Uruguay
Wednesday May 27 @ 5:45 pm**

These two days have passed quickly. We have packed as much as possible into these hours, and I hope I can say that we have all benefitted from the deliberations, the informal conversations and the presentations that have taken place, involving the entire GEF network, here in lovely Punta del Este. The network is growing; not just—or primarily—growing in numbers, but growing in knowledge, in strength and in relevance. The quality of the interactions these past days is clear evidence of this.

I would like to thank the Government of Uruguay for the tremendous support provided, beginning with the participation of [both] the President [and Vice-President] of the Republic of Uruguay, who have taken time from [their/his] busy schedule[s] to honor us with [their/his] presence. Of course, my heartfelt thanks extend to Mrs. Graciela Muslera, the Minister of Housing, Land Management and Environment who has so ably chaired the Assembly. But I cannot forget the many other parts of the government of Uruguay that have played a role in the success of this meeting, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy, and the Ministry of

Tourism. And I cannot fail to thank the many local volunteers and staff and companies, including Abtour and Congresos y Reuniones, who have worked night and day to make this event run so smoothly. Of course we cannot forget the interpreters, who have done such a fine job throughout the meeting. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to all the Assembly Participants, the delegates, the GEF agencies and conventions and civil society. And finally, I would like to thank my staff, in particular William Ehlers and his team, who have toiled for months behind the scenes to organize this event.

The GEF is a unique institution, born of a vision of multiple partners whose complimentary strengths are targeted to working in partnership with recipient countries to achieve global environmental benefits, under the multilateral environmental agreements. I expect GEF-5 to harness the potential inherent in the GEF network to its fullest extent.