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Can you have environmental sustainability if you don't have peace?

Passion for the Planet radio teams up with International Alert

“Can we ever really have environmental sustainability if we don't have peace?”

That's the question asked by Chantal Cooke and Kenny Stevens, founders of Passion for the Planet, the UK's leading radio station focused on health and environmental issues.

“When people are fighting for their lives, they don't tend to focus much on caring for the environment. Wars around the world also shift focus from green issues in countries far from conflict. Even in the UK, if we're focused on our differences, for example the “war on terror”, we're paying less attention to our environmental impact. So it's important that while we work to create more sustainable lives we also focus on peace building.” explained Passion for the Planet's Managing Director Chantal Cooke.

With this in mind Passion for the Planet approached leading peace building NGO International Alert to team up for a series of on air features to look at peace building initiatives around the world and help us all understand other cultures and peoples.

And it comes at a time when the eyes of the world will be on how the richest nations meet the challenge of assisting the most vulnerable countries adapt to the changes in their environments that are already occurring, starting with the United Nations Copenhagen Conference that is designed to lead to a new international deal to tackle climate change.

Chris Underwood, Head of Communications at International Alert, explained: “Alert revealed in our Climate of Conflict report in 2007 that 46 countries – home to 2.7 billion people – are currently at high risk of experiencing violent conflict as a result of climate driven change interacting with existing factors. We need to make the case for serious action both at the Copenhagen Conference and beyond.”

“It’s also important that we make the case for peacebuilding more generally, so we need to use every means at our disposal to reach the general public, and we see this partnership as an innovative way of doing that.”

The series starts on 23rd July 2009 and will run for 12 months. The on air features are supported by information on the web site including additional facts and case studies.

“This is an excellent initiative by a radio station that has consistently delivered innovative programming,” said Dan Smith, Secretary General of International Alert. “We’re excited about being involved and helping Passion for the Planet highlight the work of building peace, which is often ignored.”

Passion for the Planet’s Programme Director Kenny Stevens said, “We will be focusing on positive examples of peace building and what can be learnt from countries and groups that have successfully overcome terrible conflicts and

found a way to live together harmoniously. This is an important part of what Passion for the Planet is about – helping people live more fulfilling lives.”

More information can be found at www.passionfortheplanet.com. Passion for the Planet broadcasts on DAB radio and via the Internet.

Notes to editors:

1. **Passion for the Planet** is the UK’s leading radio station providing you with solutions for a green and healthy lifestyle. Playing music from around the world, mixed with interviews and features focused on your health, environment and personal development. You can listen to Passion for the Planet on DAB radio and online at: www.passionfortheplanet.com.
2. **International Alert** is an independent peacebuilding organisation that has worked for over 20 years to lay the foundations for lasting peace and security in communities affected by violent conflict. Our multifaceted approach focuses both in and across various regions; aiming to shape policies and practices that affect peacebuilding; and helping build skills and capacity through training.

Our field work is based in Africa, South Asia, the South Caucasus, Latin America, Lebanon and the Philippines. Our thematic projects work at local, regional and international levels, focusing on cross-cutting issues critical to building sustainable peace. These include business and economy, gender, governance, aid, security and justice. We are one of the world’s leading peacebuilding NGOs with more than 120 staff based in London and our 11 field offices.

3. Media enquiries

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