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Statement

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

Dear Delegates,

The Kigali amendment will enter into force on January 1st, 2019. It is now necessary to implement this agreement in all the countries as quickly and efficiently as possible. Even in developing countries that have more time to phase down the use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), new strategies for the consumption of refrigerants are needed now to avoid very difficult and costly conversions later.

It is desirable to:

- Replace as of now hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), whose phase out is already scheduled, by refrigerants with low greenhouse effect. This may require changes to the phase-out schedules, focusing first on sectors where refrigerants with low greenhouse effect can be quickly implemented.

- Seize the opportunity the replacement of HCFCs and HFCs represents, to improve the energy efficiency of facilities and more generally, of entire systems (building insulation, energy recovery, intelligent temperature control ...). We estimate that indirect emissions related to the production of the energy necessary to run cooling systems (including air conditioning), represent approximately 2.61 gigatons of CO₂ equivalent, or 63% of total emissions of the refrigeration sector.

All projections show a considerable increase in refrigeration requirements in developing countries, especially for air conditioning and food and health applications. This increase will continue throughout the century for demographic and development reasons: the energy policy of each country must take this into account.

- Implement all the necessary measures to install systems using refrigerants with low greenhouse effect safely, such as regulations on the design of facilities and the training and certification of operators. The flammability, toxicity and high pressures of alternative refrigerants should be addressed in a responsible and reasonable manner. Regulations, standards and building codes must be adapted as soon as possible to both guarantee the same safety level and take the evolution of technologies including safety devices into account.

- Improve the containment of refrigerants and their recovery at the end of current facilities' operational lives, as well as reuse of recovered alternative refrigerants after purification.

- Increase the dissemination of information on existing technologies as well as research, development, demonstrations on effective energy-efficient systems and refrigerant management adapted to alternative refrigerants and alternative refrigeration technologies.

Finally, it is worth remembering that refrigeration has also beneficial effects for the environment, by limiting post-harvest losses or installing heat pumps that are a renewable energy, and that it is, in any case, necessary for human health.

Through its scientific conferences, publications and international network of experts, the International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR) is involved in these initiatives aimed at limiting global warming and promoting sustainable development. The IIR provides science-based, objective, practical and up to date information and expertise on the possible or future technologies and their possible uses in all the fields of refrigeration, including air conditioning, heat pumps and cryogenics.

The IIR is at your disposal.
Thank you.