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## Ted Turner urges global one-child policy to save planet

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CANCUN, MEXICO— From Monday's Globe and Mail

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Climate change and population control can make for a politically explosive mix, as media mogul Ted Turner demonstrated Sunday when he urged world leaders to institute a global one-child policy to save the Earth's environment.

Mr. Turner spoke at a luncheon where economist Brian O'Neill from the U.S.'s National Center for Atmospheric Research unveiled his study on the impact of demographic trends on future greenhouse gas emission, a little-discussed subject given its political sensitivity.

Mr. O'Neill's study concluded that a rapidly rising global population is contributing to an acceleration of emission growth, and that widespread availability of family planning could reduce the amount of emissions reductions required in 2050 by as much as 30 per cent.

Mr. O'Neill acknowledged that discussion of climate change and population is a political minefield. The Roman Catholic Church has condemned any such connection, while developing countries resist rich-world prescriptions that they should limit their populations.

The global population is now close to seven billion people, and is expected to rise to 10 billion by 2050, with 80 per cent of that growth coming in developing countries.

Mr. Turner – a long-time advocate of population control – said the environmental stress on the Earth requires radical solutions, suggesting countries should follow China's lead in instituting a one-child policy to reduce global population over time. He added that fertility rights could be sold so that poor people could profit from their decision not to reproduce.

"If we're going to be here [as a species] 5,000 years from now, we're not going to do it with seven billion people," Mr. Turner said.

Former Irish president Mary Robinson warned that radical prescriptions for population control would backfire, ensuring that the subject will remain off the agenda of international climate talks.

"If we do it the wrong way, we can divide the world," Ms. Robinson said. "A lot of people in the climate world could communicate this very badly."

China boasts that its controversial one-child policy has helped limit emissions growth in that rapidly industrializing country. At the Copenhagen climate summit last year, national planning official Zhao Baige said Chinese population policy has resulted in 400 million fewer births since 1979, with a population that now

stands at 1.3 billion. The lower birth rate converts to a reduction of 1.8 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year, Ms. Zhao said.

But critics contend it has not only interfered with reproductive choice, but contributed to high levels of female infanticide and abortions.

For his part, Mr. O'Neill said he was not advocating any particular policy, although he noted that global surveys suggest there is a vast, unmet demand for family planning, and just making contraception universally available on a voluntary basis would drive down the birth rate.

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