

**National Statement to be delivered by An Taoiseach Enda
Kenny T.D.**

**21st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework
Convention on Climate Change**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you, Mr. President.

Ireland associates itself with the statements made by Presidents Juncker and Tusk and the Luxembourg Presidency, on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

COP 21 provides a unique opportunity for the political leaders of this generation to provide lasting foundations for the preservation and sustainability of generations of the future.

Excellencies, colleagues:

Many of us in this room came together in New York in September to agree the Sustainable Development Goals - the most ambitious programme of action ever agreed by the nations of the world.

Today, we meet in Paris, a city whose people have demonstrated remarkable bravery, courage and resilience in the face of the most horrendous crimes.

I hope that we are serious about putting in place a legally binding agreement on climate change that will underpin our actions on the goals already agreed and enhance our ability to reach them. This requires action by everybody – big and small.

Ireland is determined to play its part. We have committed, with our EU partners, to a collective target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030. Ireland's national long-term vision is presented in climate legislation, which sets out our intention to substantially cut CO₂ emissions by 2050, while developing an approach towards carbon neutrality in the land sector that does not compromise our capacity for food production. We are developing a National Mitigation Plan to achieve that vision.

One really significant area for Ireland is our valuable and already efficient agriculture sector. Through a series of programmes, like carbon foot-printing 43,500 beef farms and 18,000 dairy farms, we are driving economic and environmental efficiency in agriculture and achieving results that we believe are both transferable and scalable.

Our research will contribute to global progress and help all countries realise the potential of their land sectors in

addressing climate change. This is not just about opportunities - but about the cooperation that will allow us to address our common challenges. Real transparency and accountability will benefit us all but we need to trust each other and the systems that we operate in.

Building on our strong track record of supporting developing countries including in areas like climate justice, human rights, gender and education, Ireland recognises that vulnerable communities need very considerable assistance in adapting to climate change.

Despite recent difficult economic circumstances, Ireland provided public climate finance of €34 million in 2014, including support for the Least Developed Countries Fund. These funds support adaptation in agriculture, food and energy systems, and help to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable households, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa.

Ireland is committed to scaling up climate finance;

1. In addition to continuing our current level of support, which from 2016 to 2020 will ensure €175 million in public funding, mainly for adaptation, Ireland will commence contributions to the Green Climate Fund in 2016 with a view to building up our support over the coming years.
2. We will increase our contribution to the Least Developed Countries Fund and

3. We are also examining ways to mobilise private finance from Ireland, to further contribute to the 2020 goal.

The negotiations this week will be very difficult but if we are serious then we should leave Paris with an ambitious and binding agreement that will ultimately limit global temperature increase to less than 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels. In this regard, I wish to salute the leadership the French Republic has brought to hosting the negotiations.

I encourage our negotiators to bring this process to a successful conclusion next week. Let's send the signal the world is waiting for and let us not deprive our successors and their children of a real future before they are born.