

**Address by Mr. Phil Hogan, T.D.,
Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Ireland
at COP 18, Doha, 5 December 2012**

Shukran, Mr. President,

At the outset, Ireland wishes to associate itself with the statements made by Commissioner Hedegaard and the Cyprus Presidency on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

We all recognize the need to take action urgently if we are to get back on a pathway to meet the goal of keeping the global temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius. The findings in UNEP's latest Emissions Gap Report are stark. Instead of declining, greenhouse gases are actually increasing more rapidly than previous projections. Even if the most ambitious level of pledges and commitments now on the table were implemented by all countries, we will fall well short of where we need to be by 2020.

Mr. President, we must build on the progress last year in Durban and step-up that momentum. This can only be achieved through securing a balanced outcome here in Doha that builds on all elements of the Durban package.

A balanced package from Doha will involve continuing with the Kyoto Protocol until 2020 but it also means taking action now across a range of the different elements, to help deliver the new global, legally-binding agreement by 2015:

- agreeing on a high-level work plan for ADP negotiations, with a particular focus on actions and outputs in 2013, which keeps us on track for the 2015 deadline;
- making progress on closing the pre-2020 mitigation ambition gap - identifying options to close the gap and build political momentum for increased ambition for all;

- ensuring a smooth and seamless implementation of a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, from 1st of January 2013; and
- fulfilling the decision taken by all Parties in Durban to close the LCA and KP negotiating tracks, and ensure as much of the work of these bodies moves to the implementation phase, including through the many institutions set up in Cancun and Durban, to allow sufficient focus to the negotiations on the ADP.

Strengthening the means of implementation for both mitigation and adaptation is central for effective action to address the challenges of climate change. I'm pleased to confirm that, as part of the overall EU effort, Ireland will exceed its commitment to provide up to €100 million for the Fast Start Finance period. To date, Ireland has delivered over €110 million which is being used to support activities in a number of countries experiencing the worst impacts of climate change, particularly in Africa.

Of course, support for climate action will continue beyond the Fast Start period as we determine the most appropriate pathway of funding towards the headline 2020 target of US\$100 billion and how we operationalize the new Green Climate Fund. For our part, and despite challenging financial circumstances, Ireland aspires to maintaining climate finance at current levels and, together with our EU partners and as President of the EU in the first half of next year, we will engage constructively in discussions on scaling up the mobilisation of climate finance.

Mr. President, negotiations are never easy but we are optimistic that we can secure real progress here in Doha under your guidance. We are ready to support you in your efforts to lead this conference to a successful outcome at the end of this week.