

**Speech by Mr Laurent Fabius, French Minister of Foreign Affairs,
== Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate
Change, Doha, 6 December 2012==**

President, Executive Secretary,
Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

If planet Earth could talk, its message today would be simple: Mayday, Mayday, Mayday.

Above and beyond expert debates, it is decisive, while this conference meets, to have in mind **three fundamental issues and the urgent responses they call for:**

- 1) **First question: is climate change a threat? The answer is “yes”, an immense threat.** The IPCC never ceases to alert us to the worsening situation. Extreme climate events are multiplying, the damage is ever more devastating and the victims are ever more numerous. What is at stake is not simply the preservation of our environment. It is the very existence of a habitable planet.
- 2) **Second question: can we do anything about it? The answer is “yes”.** Any delay in acting makes stabilization more difficult. With a few degrees more, nobody will escape the effects of the climate turmoil. Our world will be more dangerous and more violent. Food difficulties will worsen. The number of climate refugees will skyrocket. Efforts in support of development will be cancelled out in large parts of the planet. The economic, social and financial consequences will be massive.
- 3) **Third question: have we taken on board the full scale of the danger and of the decisions to be taken? The answer is “no”.** Every year, a new world record is set for greenhouse gas emissions. The “4°C warmer world” described by the latest World Bank report, along with its dramatic consequences, is unfortunately a possibility which is on our horizon.

We are pleased to call ourselves *homo sapiens*. So we should try to show the wisdom needed to tackle the causes and consequences of these disruptions that we are responsible for.

Yes, progress has been made in the last 20 years. The Kyoto Protocol created a framework and emission reduction goals, and remains to date the only binding legal instrument at our disposal. The Bali Action Plan sketched out an opportunity for the implementation of instruments to combat the causes and effects of climate change. The Copenhagen, Cancun and Durban conferences established these instruments gradually. The Green Climate Fund, the Climate Technology Centre and Network, and the Adaptation Committee are becoming realities.

A change in pace is now vital. France is mobilized. At national level, we are committed to supporting the ecological and energy transition. Europe is also mobilized. At international level, the presence of our delegation shows our determination, alongside our Qatari hosts, to do whatever it takes for this Conference to make progress. We are engaged in the preparation of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. We will stand by our commitments of solidarity with vulnerable countries. In the framework of "Fast Start" alone, France has dedicated more than €1.2 billion to combating climate change. This figure is only a small part of our climate financing. The bilateral financing of the French Development Agency (AFD) now prioritizes renewable energy and energy efficiency. 50% of the Agency's efforts must contribute to combating climate change, that means 2 billions euros each year. Lastly, France has decided to dedicate part of the tax on financial transactions to combating climate change.

Today I announce officially that France is available to host the 2015 Climate Conference.

But we will not succeed alone. In 2020, a new agreement must enter into force, and all States Parties to the Convention must face up to their responsibilities. Everyone must make efforts, both in solidarity and in their own interests. The opposition which has been felt in the past between development and combating climate change must be overcome. The countries of the South, developing countries and those with strong growth all face environmental problems, scarce resources and the consequences of climate change. The countries of the North, faced with the economic transition and crisis, must understand that responding to environmental and climate challenges is not an additional burden, but rather a means to invent tomorrow's development, green growth founded on innovation, high added value and sustainability. The ecological and energy transition serves as significant leverage for development.

When one thinks of it, in the long run, our interests converge. Together we must invent the model that will allow us to converge towards a high level of prosperity without putting the planet in danger. This transition is an opportunity for us all. We must seize every possibility it offers to us in terms of employment and development, working collectively and cooperatively to find the right compromises.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Here in Doha, I call upon us all to make together a positive step forward in support of this change of model. **The climate is not one issue among many: it is our survival that is at stake.**

Thank you.