

**UN Climate Change Conference 2015
Paris/France**



Statement by

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Check against delivery!

Mister/Madam President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me at the outset thank the Republic of France for hosting this important Climate Summit, COP 21 , here in Paris. Our thoughts are with the victims of the terrible terrorist attacks that hit Paris on November 13th and with their families. Let me assure the people of France of our full solidarity.

Mister/Madam President,

The world is at a crossroads: This week we can break new ground in international climate policy. Important elements of our Agreement are still contested, but I am confident that we can bridge our differences in the coming days. Our planet needs progress in climate action, we have no planet B.

My country fully shares the position of the European Union as outlined by Minister Dieschbourg, and I don't need to repeat them here. Let me highlight some issues of particular importance to Austria. I am pleased to present to you my ideas for an energy transition in Europe and worldwide.

A modern and responsible climate policy has to focus on 3 elements: Firstly energy savings, secondly the use of renewable energies and thirdly energy efficiency.

To achieve the global 2 degrees Celsius target we need to dramatically reduce the overall energy consumption. The transition to renewable forms of energy must be significantly accelerated.

The European Union has set a greenhouse gas reduction target of at least 40 percent by 2030, compared to 1990. To achieve this ambitious target, we need a European Energy Transition Protocol, a common European legal framework for Energy Transition which Austria will promote actively. We must adapt our state aid schemes, increase research and development. We must promote renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy conservation.

Equally important is the global phase-out of the use of coal. Austria has almost completed this phase-out. And by 2030 we aim to a 100 percent renewable electricity generation.

But it is not only coal: We need to act decisively and jointly against direct and indirect subsidies for fossil fuels. There is absolutely no justification for the fact that still much more public funding is used for exploring, drilling and use of oil, coal and gas. Instead, we should direct these funds towards the development of clean and renewable energy sources.

We will not be able to meet our ambitious climate and energy goals without substantial price signals. Austria is among those countries which support the World Bank initiative „Putting a Price on Carbon“. As the emissions trading scheme has so far not fully succeeded in giving such

signals, I propose to consider establishing a harmonized approach on CO2 levies.

Mister/Madam President,

Finally, with regard to climate finance, Austria aims to provide at least half a billion euros for mitigation and adaptation between 2015 and 2020 in addition to our current pledge to the Green Climate Fund.

Action on climate change cannot work without active involvement of our regions. Let us act together to making this key gathering the go which our global climate needs!

Thank you!