

**Check against delivery**

**Speech by President of the Republic of Finland Sauli Niinistö at the Leaders Event of the opening ceremony of the Paris Climate Change Conference on 30 November 2015**

My heart is with the victims of the horrendous attacks here in Paris. As against terrorism, we need a concrete and united approach to combat climate change. We have no choice but to act, and bear responsibility.

What we need is a Climate agreement that charts a clear and predictable path towards future action on preventing global warming. An Agreement that guides us and leverages us towards a low carbon society. Small steps will no longer do. The biggest steps need to be taken by those with the biggest boots. But maximum effort has to be made also by involving those with smaller boots.

For the Paris Agreement to have real relevance, a global and operational, scientifically based long-term emissions reduction goal has to be set. A clear goal will also inspire investments and innovation, which provide new opportunities for sustainable development and growth.

Common rules on transparency and accountability are needed to monitor and ensure progress. Stocktaking is necessary every five years to set possible new targets or revisit existing ones.

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As an Arctic country, we in Finland have witnessed twice as fast warming compared to global average. In a way, we are acting as a global thermometer.

Finland has shouldered responsibility from early on. As part of the EU, Finland will do her part for the EU-wide greenhouse gas target of at least 40% reduction from 1990 levels by 2030. Our Climate Change Act entered into force this June and will guide us towards reduction of at least 80% by 2050. The use of emission free, renewable energy will be increased so that its share will rise to more than 50 per cent during the 2020's. Coal will no longer be used in energy production and the use of imported oil for domestic needs will be cut by half during the 2020's.

As a member of the European Union, Finland stays committed to the collective goal of mobilizing 100 billion US dollars annually by 2020

Engagement of the whole civil society is also much needed. In Finland we have come up with a citizen's climate pledge, where all who sign up, agree to decrease their own carbon footprint by half within a decade. In the end, it is up to us, the individuals to shape our own habits.

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Just during these three minutes, the carbon dioxide output of human kind has increased almost with 200 000 tons. This is twenty times the weight of the Eiffel tower. Outside this venue citizens, civil society and business are waiting for our leadership on turning the curve in the fight against climate change. Also future generations will look upon us.

We have no choice but to agree on a Climate Agreement that can exclude the worst consequences of global warming. We don't have a planet B, this is the only one.