



Statement by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel at the United Nations Climate Change Conference

Date

Nov 30, 2015

in Paris

Mr President, my dear friend François Hollande,
Secretary-General,
Colleagues,

We are meeting here in Paris in turbulent and worrying times. Only a few days ago, not far from this venue, terrorists launched an attack on the people of Paris, and by extension on us all. We condemn terrorism – wherever it strikes. By coming here today we are demonstrating that we are stronger than any terrorists.

Today, heads of government from some 150 countries have the chance to look beyond all the controversies and differing interests, and to send a very clear joint message – a message that will determine the future of our planet. At stake are the foundations on which the life of future generations will depend. We are well aware of the need to act today. That is what this Conference is all about. That is the defining feature of the outcome we will have to agree on in the next few days.

I would like to start off by thanking everyone involved in preparing this meeting, in particular the French Government and the United Nations. After a long hiatus, we now have the chance to reach our goal – an international agreement. Put simply, this means no more and no less than ensuring that the rise in global temperatures remains under 2°C in comparison with pre-industrial levels. This goal is necessary. But, as the small island states show, it is not sufficient. We therefore need a UN agreement which is ambitious, which is comprehensive, which is fair and which is binding. What does that mean? Let's look at these four elements individually. First comes ambitious: For the very first time, more than 170 countries – industrialised nations, emerging economies and developing countries – have submitted information on their intended national contributions towards reaching the 2°C target. The good news is that these relate to 95% of CO₂ emissions worldwide. The bad news is that the submitted INDCs won't be enough to reach the 2°C target. At this Summit we must therefore state credibly what we can do in the coming years in order to meet the target. We will be required, no more and no less, to undertake a far-reaching decarbonisation of our economies in the course of the 21st century.

Secondly, comprehensive:

Comprehensive means that we need a fundamental transformation of our societies embracing all sectors, including industrial production, mobility, energy generation, thermal insulation and energy efficiency. Germany has set itself clear targets. We are going to reduce our CO₂ emissions by 40% by the year 2020. And by the year 2050, we want to have reduced emissions by 80 to 95% from a 1990 baseline. We have already agreed an ambitious climate protection package comprising more than 100 measures. Renewable energies are already *the* central plank in our energy mix. This year they will account for more than 27%.

Thirdly, fair:

Fair means that the industrialised countries have to play a leading role as regards the development of decarbonisation technologies. It was us who caused the emissions of the past. Now we have to develop the technology needed to reduce emissions in the future and to make it possible for developing countries to reduce their emissions. Germany will participate in various programmes. We will, for example, double our research funding for clean energy.

We must also provide financial aid to ensure sustainable development is an option available to the poorest and most vulnerable countries. Here in Paris we have to show that we can deliver what we promised in Copenhagen and make available US\$100 billion a year from 2020 – each and every year – so that others can beat climate change. In this context Germany will double its public aid, taking 2014 as the base year, for the years to 2020.

And fourthly, binding:

We need to create a framework for a binding UN agreement. We also need a binding review mechanism. Germany would like to see reviews happen every five years, starting before 2020. We know that countries' contributions are made on a voluntary basis. But it is also important that we live up to our commitments. We cannot allow any of these contributions to be watered down over the years. On the contrary, they will have to be augmented. We need transparency regarding the methods of measurement if our pledges are to be credible.

Ladies and gentlemen, ambitious, comprehensive, fair and binding – a global climate agreement should and indeed must be all those things. This is a question of both ecological necessity and economic common sense. It is a question of intergenerational equity. It is a question of our humanity, and on it depends the future of the human race.

Germany will make its contribution so that we can look ahead to a livable future. Billions of people are pinning their hopes on what we do in Paris. Let us do everything we can not to dash those hopes.

Thank you very much.