

**Please note: the spoken words is the official text**

**Statement by H.E. Mark Rutte Prime Minister of the Netherlands at the UN Climate Change Conference ‘COP21’, Paris, 30 November 2015**

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, the world’s eyes are once again on Paris. I admire the people of this city for their resilience and determination. This conference shows that – no matter how hard it was hit on that black day a few weeks ago – les lumières de Paris brillent comme jamais. It’s good to be here.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Voltaire – the great French Enlightenment philosopher – once wrote: ‘Men argue. Nature acts.’ I believe these words hold a truth and a challenge to all of us at this summit. Because the truth is that climate change is nature’s active response to modern-day life.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is fully committed to the goal of keeping global warming below two degrees Celsius. It’s important to adapt to the effects of climate change. These two goals – climate neutrality and climate resilience – go hand in hand.

So how can we achieve those goals? What are the critical success factors? I’ll give you three:

First, every country needs to focus on measurable national targets. Our efforts must lead to a legally binding climate agreement that addresses the causes and effects of climate change.

Second, that agreement needs to be flexible and dynamic. It needs to take account of the great diversity of nations and the developments in

each of them. The traditional divide between rich and poor and north and south is no longer all defining. Countries' capabilities change. And it's important that each contributes according to their ability. The Kingdom of the Netherlands takes this responsibility in climate finance seriously. In 2010-2014 we contributed 800 million euro, and Dutch climate finance will continue to grow to 550 million in 2016.

And third, there needs to be a bigger role for companies, consumers, cities and civil society organisations. Climate policy can only work if it penetrates to the deepest roots of our society and people's behaviour. For that to happen we need every conceivable party to work together – nationally and internationally.

Let me give you a concrete example of a project that the Netherlands has a special connection with: the International Delta Coalition, in which vulnerable urban deltas from around the world share their knowledge and experience. Not only governments, but also companies, knowledge institutions and NGOs.

So, ladies and gentlemen. Let's act. Let's act together. And let's act now!

Thank you.