

**STATEMENT BY THE DUTCH MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, WILMA MANSVELD,
AT THE UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE [COP 19] IN WARSAW, POLAND,
NOVEMBER 2013**

Mr President, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

- The last couple of days we all saw the horrifying pictures of the devastating force of super typhoon Haiyan, especially in the Philippines. On behalf of the Dutch people and government I want to express my condolences to all the victims and their families. The world community has to operate closely together to help the people of the Philippines and to assist them to rebuilt their villages and cities.
- Ladies and gentlemen, working closely together is also the main task we stand for at this conference on another issue: climate change
- *'The future will be whatever we make it, and we'll make it together'*. Wise words spoken by 21-year-old Ralien Bekkers, the Dutch UN Youth Representative on Sustainable Development. Working together on the issues facing us today – achieving a sustainable, carbon-constrained and climate-proof world – is the challenge facing the international community.
- Together we must find the answers to these major issues, not just for our generation, but for generations to come. The key to such a world lies in society itself: government, businesses, the public and civil society organisations: we are all part of the solution. Luckily, awareness is growing that we need to take action across the globe. 'Business as usual' is not an option;
- International awareness is increasing that climate policy can boost the economy, employment and prosperity. I would like to draw your attention to a compelling and realistic pamphlet – “Going for green growth”, signed by a group of EU

ministers. Green growth and sustainability are here to stay – they offer opportunities for European business and societies and form a logical path to future wellbeing. Along these same lines, the Dutch government recently concluded a National Energy Agreement with other authorities, trade unions, employers' organisations and NGOs – a typical example of our successful consensus-based approach. We are aware that creative and sustainable solutions drive our economy and generate employment. That needs a sharp reduction target: at least 40% by 2030 for the European Union;

- Mr President, climate change is a global issue that calls for global solutions and global agreements. That sums up the task we face at this 19th COP. To be credible, the global community must dare to take action. Participation is key. The foremost aim of any new climate agreement should be to get all countries to take climate action. So it must allow room for different national approaches and aspirations. And it must also recognise and encourage action by the private sector, civil society and different tiers of government;
- The world will continue to change. A new agreement will need to grow with and accommodate those changes. In short, we need an agreement tailored to the realities and challenges of the 21st century. And when I talk about action, I don't just mean mitigation. All of us – from developing countries to developed nations – will have to prepare for the impact of climate change. So we need to give adaptation the attention it deserves. Not just here and now, but also in future strategies. Adaptation measures should reduce our vulnerability in the short term.
- But we also need a long-term strategy. A densely populated, low-lying country like the Netherlands is acutely aware of the enormous risks if we don't take swift action to deal with climate change and take much wider measures. We've learnt

that there's more to it than building dykes and making room for water. We also need to make society, the economy and ecosystems more resilient. In other words, countries have to become climate proof;

- This means strengthening and improving strategic adaptation planning by the public sector. Equally important, however, is the role of the private sector. It must provide expertise and investment. To this end, a new climate agreement needs to provide a practical toolkit. It must help individual countries to analyse and manage risks, assess the effectiveness of measures and share knowledge. Formalizing the progress made so far in the informal talks on the new agreement is an important aim of this COP. But concrete measures in the short term are equally important;
- Phasing out HFCs is one such measure that could achieve a very significant and short-term reduction in global emissions. The Montreal Protocol is an effective and successful instrument. I therefore urge all parties to reach speedy agreement on how we can use the Protocol and its institutions to phase out HFCs;
- Lastly, Mr President, let's agree here in Warsaw on the steps we must take next year towards the new agreement in 2015. This will involve countries putting their nationally proposed commitments on the table in 2014.
Is this ambitious? Yes!
Is it impossible? No!
Just as you yourself put it, Mr Korolec: 'Where there's a will, there's a way!';
- Let me close by thanking you, Mr President, for your warm hospitality and for all the hard work you and your team has put into making this COP a success;
- Thank you.