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PRESS RELEASE

Governments Agree the Negotiating Text for the Paris Climate Agreement

Spirit of Lima Transforms into Spirit of Geneva En Route to December Climate Conference

Geneva, 13 February 2015 – A key milestone towards a new, universal agreement on climate change was reached in Geneva following seven days of negotiations by over 190 nations.

Nations concluded the Geneva Climate Change Talks by successfully preparing the negotiating text for the 2015 agreement. The agreement is set to be reached in Paris at the end of 2015 and will come into effect in 2020.

Delegates from 194 countries convened in Geneva to continue work following the Lima Climate Change Conference held in Peru last year, which had produced elements for the negotiating text—known as the Lima Call for Climate Action.

“I am extremely encouraged by the constructive spirit and the speed at which negotiators have worked during the past week,” said Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

“We now have a formal negotiating text, which contains the views and concerns of all countries. The Lima Draft has now been transformed into the negotiating text and enjoys the full ownership of all countries,” she added.

The negotiating text covers the substantive content of the new agreement including mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity-building. Countries worked hard to identify the main choices, put their views forward and add more sharpened options to the text.

“The text was constructed in full transparency. This means that although it has become longer, countries are now fully aware of each other’s positions,” Ms. Figueres said.

The negotiating text is available on the UNFCCC’s website and will be edited and translated into the UN’s official languages. After this, the text will be communicated to the world’s capitals by the UNFCCC secretariat in the first quarter of 2015.



“This fulfills the internationally-accepted timetable for reaching a possible treaty because it alerts capitals to the fact that a legal instrument could be adopted in Paris. It does not, however, set this possibility in stone – it merely opens the door for this possibility. As for the legal nature of the agreement, this will only be clarified later in the year,” Ms. Figueres explained.

In parallel to the negotiating text being communicated to the world’s capitals, its successful construction kick-starts a year of intense negotiations towards the new agreement.

The next step is for negotiators to narrow down options and reach consensus on the content. Formal work and negotiations on the text will continue at the Climate Change Conference in Bonn in June and at two further formal sessions later in the year in Bonn (31 August to 4 September and 19 to 23 October).

Additionally, ministerial-level meetings throughout the year will include climate change on their agendas and contribute to convergence on the key political choices.

These include the Major Economies Forum; the Petersburg Climate Dialogue and the African Ministerial Conference of the Environment with the upcoming G7 and G20 meetings affording further political engagement on climate change and the Paris agreement.

“These opportunities will help to ensure that countries have opportunities to work with each other at several political levels—what is needed now is vertical integration so that the views of heads of state, through ministers and to negotiators reflects a seamless and consistent view of ambition, common ground and ultimately success in December,” Ms. Figueres said.

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About the UNFCCC

With 196 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 192 of the UNFCCC Parties. For the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, 37 States, consisting of highly industrialized countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. In Doha in 2012, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted an amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, which establishes the second commitment period under the Protocol. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

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