



**1st GLOBE Climate Legislation Summit
London, 14 January 2013**

**Statement by
Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much, Lord Deben, for the invitation. Thank you to all the wonderful people of GLOBE International for the invitation. More than anything, thank you for another excellent study, the third in a series of very important studies.

Thank you to the Grantham Research Institute of the LSE for their hard work behind the scenes and to all the sponsors. I am going to confess to you that I had another competing event today that I had to cancel in order to be with you. I did that very consciously, because I wanted to come to London to congratulate and thank GLOBE International. GLOBE, from my perspective, does two things that are absolutely critical:

- First, they put out these yearly studies. This one is full of good news. We have not 30, but 33 countries covered, 31 of which have flagship legislation. Over 50% of the countries have actually progressed, so yes, we will all like to see those little green arrows. Check out the first few pages of the book, it is a “cheat sheet.” It shows you little green arrows going up that mean progress in legislation. And, yes, we would like to see all arrows going up by next year. It is a very important piece that GLOBE publishes each year because it gives us a yearly cut, and a monitoring report, of how we are doing on domestic climate legislation. Thank you for all the hard work on that.
- The other activity that GLOBE does that I would also like to thank and congratulate you for is the technical support that GLOBE International provides to those legislators in particular countries who would like to avail themselves of the understanding and the experience that GLOBE has on the variety of climate legislation options that are out there. And, I know that GLOBE was immensely helpful in Mexico, and you are also working in China, Korea and South Africa, all very important examples of the activities of GLOBE.

I am also here in London because if I have not had the opportunity of speaking with each of you legislators personally, I would like to take advantage of today to underline the importance of what you are doing on domestic legislation. Lord Deben called it a necessary complement to the international legislation. Let me up the ante, as I think it goes beyond necessary complement. Domestic legislation on climate is the absolutely critical, essential, linchpin between action at the national level and international agreements. It is absolutely at the centre.

If you look at Doha, you can say, “Doha delivered what was planned for Doha, every single piece on the agenda was delivered.” So from a political perspective, Doha delivered what was to be delivered. However, the other important result from Doha is that it identified two very clear tasks for all countries in the world:

- The first task is to accelerate action now, not to wait for 2015, and certainly not to wait for 2020. Accelerate action now because time is very quickly running out.
- The second task that Doha assigns to all countries is the path toward a universal agreement to be reached by 2015.

My friends, I hope that this does not surprise you, but it is actually not the negotiators of the international agreement who are in the driver’s seat of that, it is actually you who are in the driver’s seat. You are the linchpin between the first task, which is climate action now, and the second task, a universal agreement by 2015. None of that can occur without national legislation, none of it.

Let’s take a look at this. It is very clear that in order for climate action to occur where it has to occur – which is nationally, domestically, in every single country – we need national legislation. I am glad to know that your study recognizes that the progress of the international climate convention has certainly had an effect on the progress of national legislation. But, I am the first to say international negotiations are moving forward way too slowly.

From my perspective, climate legislation at the domestic level should start, and should be driven by national interest. That’s the marvellous thing about addressing climate change: we’re not doing it from an altruistic point of view, to save the planet.

Yes, we will save the planet also. But, climate legislation at the domestic level must be based on and absolutely grounded in national reality. And, it must benefit national interest. So, is this domestic action going to occur with legislation that is grounded in national interest? Yes, if it has two components: carrots and sticks.

The domestic legislation that you enact needs to have incentives, and it needs to have compliance, targets or standards. The combination of the two is what is going to optimize action at the domestic level.

Furthermore, as you design your domestic legislation, I would emphasize the importance of keeping in mind two target groups at the national level:

1. Keep in mind sub-national governments. What can the national legislation do to motivate, encourage and push sub-national governments that are already doing a lot but need more support?
2. The other target group is the private sector.

Sub-national governments represent the growth in population, 80% of the world's population is projected to live in cities very soon. And hence, 80% of world emissions are going to be in cities. We have to support city legislation and city activity on climate legislation.

And private sector. Why should your legislation incentivise and push the private sector? Very simply: private sector is the seed of innovation and private sector has the capital. There are your two universes that you need to keep in my mind as you design and implement your legislation.

Now let me address your very important contribution to the global agreement. I fully agree with [Prof.] Sam [Fankhauser]. We do not have enough domestic legislation and enough domestic action to actually meet what has already been agreed internationally, the two degree maximum temperature rise.

You know negotiators have a wonderful mantra when they look at these texts and then discuss for hours about comma placement, verb changes and prepositions. The amount of negotiation that goes into every single detail of the text is quite daunting. There is a mantra that negotiators say: "Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed." And, they will put everything in brackets until everything is there, which is understandable because in the end we need a politically balanced package. So, I understand why nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.

Now, the mantra that I would like to share with you is "nothing is going to be agreed internationally, until enough is legislated domestically." Because those two things are intricately related, they build on each other, they are mutually reinforcing. And if domestic legislation can be built on your national interest – if what it does is identify, optimise, and maximize your opportunities for growth, your opportunities in each country to increase your competitiveness in the low-carbon economy – then this is actually a win-win opportunity.

So to countries like Mexico – because I am really quite impressed with the work that Mexico has done – my message to those countries that already have flagship legislation is implement, implement, implement. The legislation on paper does you no good, and certainly does the planet no good. You have to ensure that once the very difficult work of adopting legislation is done, your next chapter, your next challenge, is implementation.

And to those who are still looking at the options for adopting climate legislation, take advantage of each other. Learn from the experiences of the other countries walking the same path. Take advantage of GLOBE's resources – the

capacity, the technical input – to identify how you can continue to increase legislation on climate and adopt as quickly as possible. So implement if you have the legislation, adopt if you don't.

And to GLOBE, because you know I never stand up in public without challenging absolutely everybody. GLOBE International, here is your challenge, are you ready? Thirty countries last year, you did a fantastic job. Not only did you do thirty, you did thirty-three. So, we can double that, can't we? Sixty countries by next year!

You have my commitment, Lord Deben and all of you, to continue to support you. Please let me know how I can be helpful in accessing the needed resources because, again, it is absolutely critical that this domestic legislation be in place.

Copenhagen has been mentioned a couple of times this morning. Let me say this. In 2015 we are going to attempt, perhaps, what some people would say we did not get in Copenhagen. So what is different? Why can we be hopeful? Why can I be optimistic about 2015? Why can you be optimistic about 2015? There are 3 reasons:

- First, this time we have the written commitment of governments that they are going to agree to a universal framework. We didn't have that before Copenhagen. It was up in the air, implicit. Many people wanted it, but there was no written commitment from governments.

Now, I have grown to respect governments even more than when I worked directly for a government. I have grown to respect that when governments say "this is what we are going to do" they work day and night, as they have done in every single three of the last COPs, to do what they have promised they are going to do. So, they have promised they are going to do this. They are going to work day and night to do this, and they need your help.

- The second reason of what is different from Copenhagen is this. Unfortunately, we have much more evidence of the disastrous effects of climate change than we did in 2009. We have much more pain in the system. We have much more data and we have much more evidence on the cost: the human capital cost, the infrastructure cost, the economic development cost. Every year we will have more and more evidence of that.
- The third reason is you. Because of what you have done and are continuing to do, we have much more action on the ground. We have much more domestic legislation.

I hope that you will join me, because today I am officially starting a "can-do" campaign. The can-do campaign is that "together we are going to change the global attitude on climate change." We need less of "I don't need to do it, you do it. You do it first then I'll do it. You do it first you know because it's so difficult, it's so complicated." Yes, it's complex. But frankly, do we have any other option? We

don't. So we are going to change the global attitude on climate change. We are going to change it to a can-do attitude. Yes, we can address climate change. And yes, we can address it in a timely manner. Everything that you do is a contribution to that.

We only have three years. It's going to be a very, very short time for everything that we have to do. But, impossible is not a fact. It is only an attitude. And, I know that all of you have the attitude of the possible, and of the possibility of addressing climate change.

Last year a journalist asked me, "What keeps you up at night?" Here's what keeps me up at night. I see the eyes of seven generations of children down the line, all looking back and saying, "What did you do, what did you do?"

Some of you here in this room are not old enough to be grandparents, but you will be. You will soon be, faster than you think. And, here is my wish for you. I wish that every single one of you will be able to stand tall in front of your grandchildren and say, "I contributed to the solution, I contributed significantly to the solution."

Because that's the only way we are going to do this. I am counting on you and so are your grandchildren.

Thank you.
