



**The Climate Group 10th Anniversary
London, 28 April 2014**

**Statement by
Richard Kinley, Deputy Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Ladies and gentlemen,

I thank The Climate Group for inviting the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to join your tenth anniversary celebration. I am here on behalf of Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres, who regrets she is unable to be here.

I am delighted to join you on your tenth anniversary. Anniversaries are special; an occasion to thank the people who put in the hours, to reflect on accomplishments and to ruminate on the future.

For The Climate Group, this would keep us here far longer than I have. Your contributors and partners are household names. Your corporate partners supply the world and your subnational government partners represent more than 1 billion people. Your list of accomplishments is long and storied.

I am honored to be here and help you celebrate your anniversary...because it is also the twentieth anniversary of the UNFCCC.

Looking back, a lot has changed over the last 20 years. The Convention entered into force when the world was looking to aspirational goals. We had just defined sustainability. The ozone hole had just proven we can overcome immense environmental challenge. The future was bright, illuminated by a promise of cooperation and innovation.

Governments got right to work on climate change. Buoyed by the first two IPCC Assessments, Parties immediately increased ambition and established the first legally binding international agreement to reduce emissions in Kyoto. And somewhere in the first ten years, governments realized they cannot solve this problem alone.

The Earth had advocates, but the climate challenge requires something more: a revolutionary transformation of the global economy to low-carbon and high-resilience.

Other advocates were needed, and The Climate Group met this need. With roots in practical politics and high-profile leaders, The Climate Group and others brought the private sector into the public discourse.

This involvement benefitted the climate talks. Business groups were instrumental in the run up to Copenhagen, which has been called the most successful failure. No deal came from Copenhagen, true. But Copenhagen laid a firm foundation for agreement over the next three years.

The following year, governments established the goal of limiting warming to less than two degrees Celsius. The year after realized commitment to a new, universal climate change agreement by 2015. And the next year, governments extended the Kyoto Protocol through 2020. Copenhagen made that possible.

Business and subnational governments also helped this recent success, which is good. Our climate-safe revolution must happen with business and local government on the barricades. And you amplify the climate talks into these crucial spaces.

Today, we are at a point where our future is ours to choose. Risks of inaction are clear and impacts material.

Recent UK flooding is part of the stream of never-ending economic impacts from heat, drought, rising seas and extreme weather. Climate change hasn't just entered our collective conscious. It is creeping into boardrooms and onto balance sheets.

Investors are assessing carbon risk and stranded assets. Calls for transparency are prompting response. Clean, renewable energy is installed at record levels. Even fossil fuel companies are pricing carbon.

This is all smart business. It is reckless for industry and government to fail to examine their vulnerabilities. And leaders are moving.

Megacities are curbing emissions with policies that benefit residents. Provinces, states and regions have progressed on carbon markets, resilient infrastructure and green jobs. National legislation has increased dramatically. And every government, without exception, is committed to a new, universal climate agreement.

Does all this mean we are on track to a low-carbon world that will spare people and planet from out-of-control climate change?

Unfortunately, it does not.

Industrialized country emissions have slowed alongside growth, but net emissions are at record levels. Increased carbon disclosure in the private sector hasn't reduced emissions. And fossil fuel exploration continues to outpace investment in renewables.

Our action to date has not achieved our primary goals: hitting the root causes of climate change, reducing emissions, stopping deforestation and building resilience.

That is where we must go in the next ten years. We must bend the emissions curve this decade. We must realize a carbon-neutral global economy by the second half of the century. We must limit warming to less than two degrees for healthy communities, healthy economies and a healthy planet.

Bending the curve requires a revolution in energy, industry and transportation. Real leadership by industrialized countries means a peak and decline in emissions this decade. It means capitalizing the Green Climate Fund, shifting investment patterns and accelerating technology transfer.

And for developing countries, the challenge is to meet development imperatives while emissions peak and then decline, with resilient infrastructure and a growth model that balances the needs of people and planet.

Companies must pass a similar litmus test, looking at the same metrics. Have your emissions peaked? Are you using the most efficient technologies? Are you managing long-term climate risks? What is your investment strategy toward carbon neutrality?

All actors must do their part to bend the emission curve sufficiently to move to a completely carbon-neutral global economy in this century.

The Paris agreement must facilitate this as a framework for managing risk and increasing resilience. It must include a global commitment to reduce emissions, chart a path out of danger and manage our effort to stay climate safe with mechanisms that regularly ratchet up ambition and objective monitoring and reporting.

The Paris agreement needs vocal and visible business and subnational government support to show without doubt that the transition is doable, the solutions are better than the problem.

Clearly Paris needs you, but what is also clear is that you need Paris.

Business needs a clear framework from policymakers and policymakers need clear support. An ambitious agreement is a boon to all, and Paris is ours to win or lose this year.

This year is key because the negotiations are ramping up with a draft agreement expected on the table by December, and in less than 12 months governments will reveal what they can contribute.

Right now, governments need strong signals from you. They need these signals at the Secretary-General's 2014 Climate Summit and they need to hear how holding temperature rise well below two degrees is a blueprint for a prosperous and profitable future.

This is where your influence and leverage comes in. Today, I ask you to:

- Lobby for policies that keep us under two degrees, bend the curve and take us to carbon net zero because deep pockets are lobbying against those policies;
- Activate your networks to reach the individuals and organizations that don't already know the true value of action and tell them; and
- Ramp up your action visibly to all governments. Show them you mean business.

I realize this is a lot to ask from a group that has shown unprecedented leadership. But, we are running out of time. This moment is our opportunity to create the future we want and need. We must inspire each other to act, to be bold and ambitious.

On the occasion of your tenth anniversary, I ask you to take the action now that paves the way for a successful next ten years.

I ask you to do this for yourselves, your constituents, your shareholders. I ask you to do this for the next generation and generations to follow. We must leave a legacy of opportunity borne from sustainable, low-carbon development.

So let's all meet again at the Secretary-General's Summit, where I look forward to The Climate Group's leadership fingerprints on bold announcements that can and must catalyse strong outcomes in Paris, in public and private sectors and into perpetuity.

Thank you.

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