



**Nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 19)
and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties
serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 9)
Warsaw, 11 November 2013**

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

H.E. Mr. Marcin Korolec, President of COP 19/CMP 9
H.E. Mr. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, President of COP 18/CMP 8
Honourable representatives of the Government of Poland,
Honourable Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, Mayor of Warsaw,
Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you all to the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. *Witam Państwa w Warszawie.*

I sincerely thank the COP President and his team for the careful and comprehensive preparatory work that has made this conference possible. I also thank the people of Poland and the City of Warsaw for the warm reception.

Ladies and gentlemen, we gather today under the weight of many sobering realities, of which I will mention only two. The first we experience every day and do not notice. Please take a deep breath. As you do, be aware that we are the first human beings to ever breathe air with 400 parts per million CO₂. I rely on Dr. Pachauri to elucidate on what that means.

The second is the devastating impact of Typhoon Haiyan, one of the most powerful typhoons to ever make landfall. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of the Philippines, Viet Nam and South-East Asia.

Against the backdrop of sound science and climate effects the extent and scope of which we are only beginning to experience, COP 19 opens in Poland's National Stadium.

There is no doubt that climate change has created an unlevel playing field for future generations. Previous generations unknowingly had an advantage; and now we know that the next generations face a monumental uphill struggle. We must urgently level the playing field, and can do so aided by three contributing factors:

First, the world is ready. Our collective climate-friendly capacity has increased as the risks of inaction materialize and the rewards of action magnify and multiply.

Second, there is a groundswell of climate action. Not only for environmental reasons, but also for security, energy, economic and governance reasons. Political will and public support favour action now.

Third, a new universal climate agreement is within our reach. Agencies, development banks, investors and subnational governments are on board. The science from the IPCC is clear. Parties can lead the momentum for change and move together towards success in 2015.

For these reasons, we must win the Warsaw opportunity. We must stay focused, exert maximum effort for the full time and produce a positive result, because what happens in this stadium is not a game. There are not two sides, but the whole of humanity. There are no winners and losers, we all either win or lose in the future we make for ourselves.

This is why COP 19 must deliver on several key areas. We must clarify finance that enables the entire world to move towards low-carbon development. We must launch the construction of a mechanism that helps vulnerable populations to respond to the unanticipated effects of climate change.

We must deliver an effective path to pre-2020 ambition, and develop further clarity for elements of the new agreement that will shape the post-2020 global climate, economic and development agendas.

Dear friends, the world is showing action, but it is time to go that extra mile. This stadium is the perfect venue to take inspiration from the Olympic motto, *Citius, Altius, Fortius*. This is the conference to move faster, higher, stronger towards the socially equitable and economically sustainable future we want and need.

Much of this can be accomplished before the high-level segment. And much can be accomplished without going into overtime on the last Friday!

Thank you. *Dziękuję*.

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