



Opening statement for the High-level segment of the twenty-first sessions of the Conference of the Parties and the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol delivered by Carole Dieschbourg and Miguel Arias Cañete on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

Paris, 7 December 2015

Carole Dieschbourg, Minister for the Environment, Luxembourg

Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, Mesdames, Messieurs.

Nous avons l'honneur de parler pour l'Union Européenne et ses Etats Membres.

Nous sommes venus à Paris pour ouvrir un nouveau chapitre de la lutte universelle contre le changement climatique et ses répercussions.

Mr President; Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

We came here to Paris to open a new chapter in the global fight against climate change and its impacts.

We should be aware of our mission: during the next days we speak not only about numbers, about percentages and statistics. Behind the numbers are human lives – there are human destinies, it is about our planet. We have a big responsibility to deliver.

The new Agreement is now within reach. We have an opportunity to go down in history as ministers who together set the global economic development on a more sustainable course, on a course which leads to global stability and wellbeing.

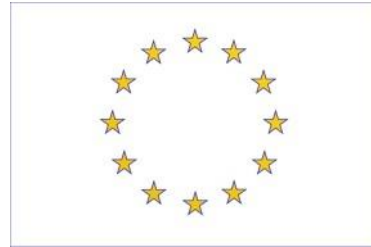
We have been negotiating under the Convention for twenty years. We have made some steps forward, but they are clearly not enough. Global greenhouse gas emissions are still rising.

We need to stop this – and we need to act now!

We need a solid and ambitious agreement, applicable to all, to finally stem these dangerous trends.

Mr President,

Our message today is simple: **we are confident we can rise to the challenge, if we all show openness and willingness to compromise.**



The world is now ready. Our leaders have signed off on 185 INDCs covering more than 95 % of emissions. Almost 150 Heads of State and Government came here last Monday to reconfirm their determination.

We also have strong support from the business community and civil society all over the world in all the activities and measures reflected in the Lima-Paris Action Agenda.

We would fail them if we left Paris without a robust agreement which has a long-term goal, assures transparency and upward review cycles.

We are confident because we now know that climate action is not only compatible with economic development – it's even the condition for further economic and human development.

We have evidence from around the globe that all points to the opportunities that come with transitioning to low carbon economy. Climate action carries multiple benefits - improved human health, access to sustainable energy; safer food and water supply – exactly the themes that countries highlighted most when presenting adaptation elements in their INDCs.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also recognises the intrinsic links between development and climate. And there is also the existing experience we have - since 1990, the European Union has cut its emissions by 23 per cent while growing our economy by 46 per cent. Now, we have set ourselves an even more ambitious target of at least 40 per cent reduction by 2030.

We know from experience that climate action is not a punishment or a straitjacket – it's a moral obligation and an economic opportunity.

Mr President,

We are also confident because we think the INDCs are only the beginning.

It can be very hard to design a climate policy for the first time. However, as we progress with implementation, we also realise the gains.

The Lima Paris Action Agenda of the Peruvian and French COP Presidencies shows that there is a vast amount of willingness from all stakeholders, including cities and businesses, to act. The role of non-state actors and regions has to be recognized in the agreement.

And we are confident because we know we can mobilise the necessary means. Climate finance, domestic and international, is flowing to both adaptation and mitigation. Not only are developed countries on track for the \$100 billion goal by 2020, but it is encouraging to see that South-South cooperation is also picking up.

With the Paris Agreement, we will be able not only to continue mobilising billions in public money, but also reorient trillions in private finance.



Let us seize the opportunities now and work together for a solid agreement. Let us realize that there is more that connects us than could possibly divide us.

Let us show courage and commitment.

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Miguel Arias Cañete, Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, European Commission

Mr President,

The European Union came to Paris with a very clear objective: to conclude a **fair, inclusive, dynamic, durable and ambitious legally binding climate agreement** that will stop climate change over the century.

Paris is a historic opportunity that we cannot miss.

We must translate the momentum we have seen on the road to Paris into an **ambitious agreement**.

The European Union wants to sign an ambitious agreement and **not just any kind of agreement**.

We need a **robust agreement**.

We need a **credible agreement**.

We need an agreement **fit for purpose and fit for the future**.

We owe this to the outside world: our citizens and our children.

To succeed, we need every country doing its very best and the world moving together in the same direction. The world has changed for the better, and everyone needs to take responsibility.

For the European Union, the **credibility** of the deal will depend on our collective ambition.

First, mitigation ambition:

In order to really reduce global emissions, the agreement must have:

- A global vision for a long-term operational goal in line with science. This goal will tell us how and when we need to increase the ambition to meet our target;
- A regular review every five years to consider the progress made and raise our collective ambition. This is essential since we know that initial contributions will not be enough to keep temperature increase within the below 2 degrees objective.
- A robust transparency and accountability system to ensure that what is promised will be delivered.



These elements are necessary to give the world the confidence that , we the governments, are determined to do what it takes to stop catastrophic climate change.

Second, adaptation ambition.

Beyond emissions reductions, this agreement must help countries, especially those most vulnerable, **adapt to climate change impacts.**

The European Union is the world's leader provider of climate finance with more than half of the total global climate finance.

Our message to the most vulnerable countries is very clear: **you can count on the European Union.**

We have done a lot in the past, and we will continue to do more.

Together, we must conclude a **balanced agreement** that will help us reduce emissions while helping the most vulnerable to adapt to the existing climate impacts.

Mr President,

These are not just the European Union's priorities.

Only a week ago here in Paris, we heard the global leaders call for these elements by and large in unison.

We have confidence in your leadership and in our collective wisdom and determination.

The European Union come here to Paris to seal an ambitious deal.

We look forward to the next few days.

Let us get the job done. Together.