



## **The Paris Agreement: Next steps**

### **Text adopted by the COP in Paris**

1. On 12 December 2015, the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP) adopted the Paris Agreement by decision 1/CP.21. The text of the Paris Agreement is contained in the annex to this decision, while the decision itself is contained in the report of the COP on its twenty-first session. The report, including the Paris Agreement, is available in all six official UN languages [here](#).
2. As part of the finalization of the COP 21 report, under the authority of the President a very limited number of corrections of a purely editorial nature were introduced into the text of the Paris Agreement. In order to ensure full transparency, [details](#) on the corrections were made available on the UNFCCC website.

### **Transmission of the authentic text of the Paris Agreement to the Depositary**

3. Article 26 of the Paris Agreement provides that the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall be the Depositary of the Agreement. As Depositary, the Secretary-General will be responsible for ensuring the proper execution of all treaty actions related to the Agreement (see paragraph 10 below for relevant treaty actions). The Treaty Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs assists the Secretary-General in carrying out his depositary functions relating to multilateral treaties.
4. Pursuant to Article 29 of the Paris Agreement, the texts of the Agreement in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are equally authentic. On 1 March 2016, the UNFCCC Executive Secretary transmitted the authentic text of the Paris Agreement to the Depositary.

### **Preparation by the Depositary of the original of the Agreement for signature and the distribution of certified true copies**

5. After receipt of the authentic text of the Paris Agreement from the UNFCCC Executive Secretary, the Depositary will prepare the original and the certified true copies of the Agreement and perform the requisite depositary functions, including the distribution of the certified true copies in advance of the opening the Agreement for signature. The original will contain a cover page, the authentic text of the Paris Agreement in all six languages and the signature pages on which the duly authorized representatives of Parties to the Convention would affix their signatures. The certified true copies will be distributed to all Parties to the Convention in advance of the Agreement being opened for signature.



## **Opening for signature and high-level signature ceremony to be convened by the UN Secretary-General**

6. In accordance with Article 20, paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement, the Agreement will be open for signature at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 22 April 2016 to 21 April 2017. The COP has invited the Secretary-General to convene a high-level signature ceremony on 22 April 2016, and has invited all Parties to the Convention to sign the Agreement at this ceremony or at their earliest opportunity. In accordance with treaty law, signing the Paris Agreement indicates the intention of a Party to the Convention to take steps to express its consent to be bound by the Agreement at a later date (see paragraph 9 below).

7. Under established international practice, only Heads of State or Government and Ministers for Foreign Affairs are empowered, by virtue of their functions, to sign treaties on behalf of States without having to produce full powers to that effect. Other representatives wishing to sign the Agreement must be in possession of appropriate full powers emanating from one of these authorities. In due course, States wishing to sign the Agreement shall, if necessary, provide in advance the required full powers to the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

8. Further information on the high-level signature ceremony will be provided shortly.

## **Becoming a Party to the Paris Agreement**

9. According to Article 20, paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement, to become a Party to the Agreement a State or regional economic integration organization that is a Party to the Convention needs to deposit its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary. A Party to the Convention that has signed the Agreement may deposit its instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval following signature. A Party to the Convention that has not signed the Agreement during the period when it was open for signature may deposit its instrument of accession from the day following the date on which it was closed for signature.

10. Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession should be sent to the Treaty Section, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations Headquarters, New York.



### **First nationally determined contribution**

11. The COP invited Parties to communicate their first nationally determined contribution (NDC) no later than when the Party submits its respective instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. In accordance with decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 22, if a Party has communicated an intended nationally determined contribution (INDC) prior to joining the Agreement, then its INDC shall be considered the Party's first NDC under the Agreement unless that Party decides otherwise. A Party has the opportunity to enhance its INDC by communicating a more ambitious NDC, if it so desires, before or when submitting its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

### **Entry into force of the Paris Agreement**

12. In accordance with Article 21, paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement, the Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55 per cent of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary.

13. Solely for the purpose of determining the date of entry into force of the Paris Agreement, the secretariat has been requested to make available on its website on the date of adoption of the Agreement, as well as in the report on COP 21, information on the most up-to-date total and per cent of greenhouse gas emissions communicated by Parties to the Convention in their national communications, greenhouse gas inventory reports, biennial reports or biennial update reports. This information is available on the UNFCCC website at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/10.pdf#page=30>.

Bonn, 29 February 2016