



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to South Africa

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Press Release

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Copenhagen conference must produce global, ambitious and comprehensive agreement

Ahead of the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen (7-18 December) European Union leaders have underlined the vital importance of reaching a global, ambitious and comprehensive climate agreement. The European Commission's President, José Manuel Barroso, is clear: "We are approaching the moment of truth at Copenhagen. Words are no longer enough – now we need to see commitments from all sides."

Pre-empting calls for the European Union to go beyond rhetoric, President Barroso said: "We must seize this chance to keep global warming below 2°C before it is too late. The EU has set the pace with our unilateral commitment to cut emissions 20% by 2020 and our climate financing proposals for developing countries. We will be ready to scale up our emission reduction to 30% provided our partners in both the developed and the developing world take on their fair share of the global effort."

In South Africa, the European Union's Head of Delegation, Lodewijk Briët, adds: "Climate change has been high on the bilateral agenda between South Africa and the EU. I am confident that both the European Union and South Africa will be able to play leading roles in finding the compromises required to achieve maximum progress towards the finalisation of an ambitious and legally binding global climate treaty to succeed the Kyoto Protocol in 2013".

Ambassador Briët goes on to note that at the 2nd SA-EU Summit (Sept 2009) the partners jointly recognised that Africa was particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and agreed that it was necessary to move without delay towards a global low-carbon/clean energy economy.

The partners jointly declared "We will continue to work together to ensure that the increase in global warming stays below 2°C, underpinned by clear and ambitious mid-term quantified national emission reduction targets for developed countries and measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries".

It was accepted that scaled-up funding to deal with the costs of mitigation and adaptation actions, notably for the most vulnerable developing countries, was needed. Based on a combination of responsibility for emissions and ability to pay, and depending on the outcome of the agreement in Copenhagen, this could translate into an EU contribution of up to €15 billion (R168 billion) a year by 2020.

For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/home_en.htm

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Background Information

Key European Union objectives

International negotiations were launched at the end of 2007 to draw up a United Nations agreement on tackling climate change for the period after 2012, when the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol expires. The EU wants these negotiations to result in a comprehensive, ambitious, fair, science-based and legally binding global treaty.

The new treaty should aim to ensure global warming is kept below 2°C above the pre-industrial temperature. It should cover all elements of the 2007 Bali Action Plan, which set the agenda and scope of the international negotiations.

Given the slow progress made in the negotiations to date, and a lack of consensus about the shape of the eventual agreement, it is now unlikely that the treaty can be finalised at the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen on 7-18 December as originally planned.

The EU's goal is therefore to make as much progress as possible in Copenhagen towards a full treaty and to reach an ambitious and comprehensive political agreement covering all its key elements.

This agreement would shape the full contours of the final outcome of the negotiating process, provide the guidance needed to elaborate it into a legal text, and specify both a process for doing so and, if possible, the shape of the legal agreement to be reached.

From the EU's viewpoint, the Copenhagen agreement will need to cover four elements:

1. Pledges on emissions and finance

The two central pledges that developed and developing countries alike will be expected to make in Copenhagen are their contributions in terms of mitigating their greenhouse gas emissions and of providing financial assistance, particularly to the poorest and most vulnerable developing countries.

On mitigation, developed countries should make ambitious, binding and quantified emission limitation or reduction commitments. To keep the 2°C target within reach, these commitments need to amount to a cut in collective emissions from developed countries in the order of 30% below 1990 levels by 2020.

Action is also needed by developing countries. In particular the more economically advanced developing countries should pledge ambitious, quantified mitigation actions. Overall developing country pledges should amount to a substantial deviation - in the order of 15-30% - below the currently predicted growth rate in their collective emissions by 2020.

The EU has committed unconditionally to cut its emissions to at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2020 and is implementing this goal through the climate and energy package. It has also committed to scale up its emission cut to 30% provided other industrialised countries agree to make comparable reductions and developing countries contribute adequately to the global effort according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Regarding finance, a deal is needed on both 'fast start' financing to help developing countries strengthen their capacities to tackle climate change in the short term (2010-2012) and a significant scaling up of public and private financial flows to developing countries from 2013. The EU is ready to contribute its fair share of both.

Total international public finance required by developing countries to combat climate change is estimated by the European Commission in the range of €22-50 billion per year by 2020 under a global agreement that is in line with the EU's level of ambition. The EU wants contributions to be shared fairly on the basis of a comprehensive global key reflecting

contributing countries' emission levels and ability to pay (GDP). All countries except the least developed should contribute, but developing countries would be net beneficiaries.

It is vital that both mitigation and financial commitments are captured in the Copenhagen agreement in the strongest possible manner. The best way to do this is to include them in a Decision by the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

2. Key architectural components of the future treaty

The key architectural components of the future treaty need to be agreed because they can significantly affect how ambitious the mitigation pledges are in practice. They are also needed to ensure the pledges are implemented.

These key architectural components include the following:

- A procedure for codifying emission mitigation contributions by developed and developing countries and for reviewing and updating them;
- Targets for reducing global emissions from the international aviation and maritime transport sectors, an international arrangement to address emissions of hydrofluorocarbon gases (HFCs) and a work programme for the agriculture sector;
- A framework for action on adaptation to climate change;
- A framework for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) and promoting conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) in developing countries;
- Accounting rules for emission changes due to land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) in developed countries;
- The role of low carbon growth plans and nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs);
- The role and use of carbon markets, including reform of the Clean Development Mechanism and Joint Implementation mechanism and the establishment of sectoral carbon market mechanisms;
- Institutional arrangements for the management and matching up of international financial resources with developing countries' financing needs;
- A framework for stepping up international cooperation on technology;
- The length of the treaty's commitment period; starting levels for measuring emission reductions; treatment of the surplus of national emission rights (assigned amount units) from the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period; and a framework of rules on compliance;
- Strengthened rules on monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of action on mitigation and adaptation and of related support.

The conference should anchor political agreements on each of these elements in the text of an overarching COP Decision.

3. A 'fast start' deal

The implementation of key elements of the Copenhagen agreement should start immediately after the conference, facilitated by the provision of targeted 'fast start' financial support to developing countries.

Possible elements of the 'fast start' deal are:

- Preparation of low carbon growth plans and NAMAs, including financing to support these activities;
- Readiness for REDD, including financing for capacity building and elaboration of national forest inventories;
- Implementation of the adaptation action framework, including the set-up of any institutions and provision of financing to developing countries for further adaptation plans and their implementation;
- Preparations for implementing sectoral carbon market mechanisms, including capacity building for the monitoring and reporting of emissions from key sectors in advanced developing countries;
- Preparations for the implementation of a strengthened system of monitoring, reporting and review (MRV).

Each of these elements could be elaborated through separate Decisions taken by the COP.

4. The follow-up process

The international negotiations have been organised on two parallel 'tracks' under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol respectively. The Copenhagen agreement needs to decide on a single track for the follow-up process.

The EU has made clear it wants to see a single, new, legally binding treaty as the outcome of the current two-track process. The treaty should contain all the essential elements of the Kyoto Protocol plus further emission commitments by all developed countries, including the US, and emission actions by developing countries. It should be capable of universal ratification.

The EU has several reasons for this preference:

- **Universal participation:** a single instrument favours universal participation because only one ratification process would be required. By contrast, an agreement involving two or more instruments would run the risk of them not achieving an identical number of ratifications and of not entering into force at the same time.
- **Consistency:** A single instrument enables consistency because it avoids separate parallel international regimes.
- **Institutions:** a single instrument would offer better opportunities to streamline the international institutional framework for addressing climate change, avoiding duplication and waste of resources.
- **Carbon market:** a single instrument would promote greater certainty for the international carbon market, given the risk of a fragmented international climate regime if two or more instruments require ratification.
- **Differentiation:** a single instrument does not preclude the differentiation of obligations between different countries.