



From Lima to Paris: An Agenda for Climate Change

Foreword to the EU-CELAC Foundation Newsletter on Climate Change (COP 21)

*by Laurent Fabius**

The 21st United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP21) opens on 30 November in Paris. France has committed to hosting the most important diplomatic event that it has organized since the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Paris in 1948. It is an honour and a great responsibility to host 196 delegations, hundreds of elected officials, representatives of 2000 non-governmental organizations and some 3000 journalists for two weeks.

This Conference will be not only hosted but also chaired by France. France has been preparing for the Conference by holding consultations with all States, to enable the conclusion of a climate agreement that is commensurate with the stakes involved. Reaching a compromise based on the positions of 196 parties – 195 parties plus EU – is no easy matter, yet we all know the extent to which this is necessary.

This is because we are facing an unprecedented challenge, a challenge which affects all aspects of life and knows no frontiers, a challenge which commits us to future generations. In order to stem disastrous climate change, we must limit the increase in mean global temperature to 2°C above pre-industrial levels or even 1.5°C if possible. We will also have to adapt to the inevitable consequences.

The Climate Conference in Paris will be considered a success if four results are achieved: the Agreement itself, which will make it possible to set rules, a long-term course and provisions to increase the level of ambition over time; States' Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), which today cover almost 90% of global emissions; a "finance, technology and capacity-building" package, which will demonstrate solidarity with the developing countries, and effectiveness with a view to the rapid implementation of the Paris outcome; lastly, an Action Agenda, which will highlight the many voluntary commitments made by local governments, businesses, investors and NGOs in addition to those made by States.

Each stakeholder and each economic sector will have to take up the challenge at their level and find their place in a climate-compatible world. The transformation must continue everywhere, without waiting for the entry into force of the future agreement in 2020. It is urgently necessary to cut emissions in high-emission sectors such as transport, energy, agriculture and forestry, and to address key issues such as access to water, food security and climate risk prevention. The



presentation of the Lima-Paris Action Agenda during the Paris Conference will make it possible to demonstrate this process.

I hope, and do not doubt, that we will be able to keep relying on our European and Latin American partners to reach an ambitious outcome in Paris. Latin America and the Caribbean currently account for about 10% of greenhouse gas emissions, which may seem modest, but regional per capita emissions could reach 10 tonnes by the mid-21st century if nothing is done. Climate change could cause a loss of GDP of 2% per annum for Latin-America and the Caribbean by that stage. This issue must therefore be tackled head-on.

We have been working closely with the Peruvian presidency since the beginning. The success of COP20 last year in Lima is a source of inspiration for us. France and Peru, which represent two different hemispheres, light each other's path to show the international community the only road that will guarantee our shared future.

At the EU-CELAC Summit 2015 on 9 and 10 June, the President of the French Republic highlighted the issues of climate change. He had done so during the Martinique Summit on 8 May, which brought together the Caribbean States. He had then issued the Fort-de-France Appeal, which was repeated at the EU-CARIFORUM high-level meeting on 11 June 2015.

Action against climate change is a struggle against poverty and for development. It must draw on initiatives like the EUROCLIMA initiative, which makes it possible to integrate climate-change issues into sustainable development strategies. I hope that, immediately after COP21, the bi-regional Action Plan between Europe and Latin America will be strengthened as regards climate issues.

The Paris Conference is viewed by all as the outcome of twenty years of climate negotiations. Above all, it will also be a new start. We must now set off, all of us together, on a journey towards a low-carbon and climate-resilient world.

***Laurent Fabius** is currently Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development and has been in office since 2012. He has held many ministerial positions during his career, including that of Prime Minister from 1984 to 1986. He was also Budget Minister from 1981 to 1983, Minister of Industry and Research from 1983 to 1984, and Minister for the Economy, Finance and Industry from 2000 to 2002. He was elected Deputy for the Seine-Maritime Department for the first time in 1978 and continually re-elected ever since. Laurent Fabius served two terms as President of the National Assembly, from 1988 to 1992 and from 1997 to 2000.



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