



Paris Agreement signing ceremony in New York – the EU calls for swift ratification

Brussels, 21 April 2016

The European Union will sign the Paris Agreement on climate change on Friday 22 April in New York.

The signing ceremony, convened by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, follows the adoption of the world's first universal climate change agreement by 195 countries in [Paris on 12 December 2015](#). The European Union was the first major economy to table its commitment in the [run up to the Paris climate conference COP21](#) and now looks forward to having the Agreement ratified and entering into force swiftly.

On behalf of President Jean-Claude Juncker, the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for the Energy Union, Maroš Šefčovič, and the Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete will attend the high-level ceremony. Vice-President Šefčovič and Dutch Environment Minister Sharon Dijksma will sign the agreement on behalf of the European Union and Commissioner Arias Cañete will deliver the official statement on behalf of the European Union.

Vice-President Šefčovič said in Brussels: *"Our signature means first and foremost that we are signing up to the commitments we made in Paris. It sends also a clear signal that we are signing up to a fundamental and disruptive transition to a low-carbon economy and society. This transition is now irreversible and unstoppable. At the global level, we are seeing the winds of change. Europe is part of this and will continue to be a driving force. That's why we need to deliver the Energy Union and create the conditions for future opportunities, innovation and job-creation that this transition will bring. Let's use the momentum."*

Commissioner Arias Cañete said: *"We have agreed. We will sign, and we will act. In Europe, we have already started our homework of implementing the Paris Agreement and we will continue to lead the global low-carbon economy transition. We will ratify the Paris Agreement by securing the support of our 29 parliaments, and by demonstrating that we will have the policies in place to meet our commitments. This will ensure that when we act, we will act on a solid legal basis. Already before the start of this summer, the European Commission will present a proposal to the Council to ratify the Paris Agreement on behalf of the European Union."*

During the visit to New York, Vice-President Šefčovič will have a bilateral meeting with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and with Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Director Achim Steiner to follow up on the COP21 Business Summit. He will also meet Michael Bloomberg, UNSG Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change to discuss further synergies between the Covenant of Mayors and the UN-led Compact of Mayors, underlining the importance that local actors play in the global fight against climate change. Commissioner Arias Cañete will participate in the special meeting of the High Ambition Coalition, the alliance of developing and developed nations that was instrumental in securing a successful outcome at the Paris climate conference in December 2015. He will also meet with the climate and energy ministers of China, USA, India, Turkey, Canada and Thailand to advance negotiations towards Marrakesh's COP 22. Finally, the Commissioner will participate in the Climate Finance Ministerial and the [Major Economies Forum](#) meetings focused on the international collaborative efforts to implement the Paris Agreement.

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement sets out a global action plan to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2°C and to drive efforts to limit the increase even further to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The agreement also aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change.

The agreement will enter into force once it has been ratified by at least 55 parties, representing at least 55 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. For the European Union, this will require not only a legislative procedure at EU level – involving the consent of the European Parliament – but also ratification in each of the 28 Member States.

The Commission presented in March 2016 [an assessment of the implications](#) for the European Union of the Paris Agreement. The European Council in its conclusions 18 March 2016 called for the signature and timely ratification of the Paris Agreement by the Member States. The Council invited the Commission to present the key remaining legislative proposals to implement the 2030 framework which underlines the EU's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions domestically and to increase the share of renewable energies and improve energy efficiency, in line with the agreement by the European Council in October 2014.

In this context, and respecting the [European Council conclusions of October 2014](#), the Commission will in the next 12 months present proposals for an Effort-Sharing Decision for sectors not covered by the EU Emissions Trading System and on land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF), legislation to set up a reliable and transparent climate and energy governance mechanism for the post-2020 period, and the necessary policy proposals to adapt the EU's regulatory framework in order to put energy efficiency first and to foster EU's role as a world leader in the field of renewable energy.

Next steps

The first negotiating session since the adoption of the Paris Agreement will take place at the Climate Change Conference from 16 to 26 May 2016 in Bonn, Germany. This will consider the technical implementation details of the agreement and how to take forward action before 2020.

The EU will also be working to keep climate at the top of the political agenda and Commissioner Arias Cañete will participate in the upcoming the G7 Energy Ministerial meeting in Kitakyushu, Japan, from 1-2 May 2016.

IP/16/1485

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