

# THE PARIS AGREEMENT IS A DECISIVE STEP IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE; STILL MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE

Mexico City, December 17, 2015

The Paris Agreement sets a turning point in the history of negotiations on climate change in several ways. First of all, it's the most comprehensive, universal and balanced agreement ever signed in the 23 years in which this issue has been a part of the international agenda. It stipulates that all countries, without distinction, determine their national determined contributions and commit to making and reporting their efforts regarding emissions reduction, which must be ambitious, but always according each of their capabilities. It also determines mechanisms for transparency and accountability to verify commitments not only in terms of reducing emissions and adaptation efforts, but also support in terms of financing, technology transfer and capacity development. The Agreement is flexible and contemplates periodic reviewing processes at least every five years in order to increase the level of commitments. It also seeks to be fair, as it's built on the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", including provisions aimed at supporting the least developed countries and communities, as well as the most vulnerable population against the impacts of climate change.

We are very optimistic with the agreement reached. It represents a triumph of multilateralism and an example of the value in collective efforts by all countries, for despite differences in development and capacity level, in the degree of responsibility for causing the problem, the vulnerability to the impacts climate change causes and national interests, all nations were able to establish common goals and actions against the greatest challenge humanity is currently facing.

With the COP21 in Paris, an intense negotiation process culminates, during which bringing positions closer and strengthening a global effort to address climate change was sought. This problem involved in its causes and consequences the scientific, technical, economic, social, legal, political and even ideological issues, on which 195 countries had not been able to achieve consensus and collective actions. With the Paris Agreement, a fundamental step is taken in the right direction, but there is still much work to be done in order to consolidate and convert it into actions, and even more so that these become reinforced and accelerated in the midst of what this phenomenon requires. The Agreement itself recognizes that it is not enough to satisfactorily solve the problem faced, and establishes mechanisms to increase its level of ambition in the immediate future, in particular regarding the periodic review of goals and individual and collective efforts to achieve them.

The efforts established are directed at holding the increase in global temperature to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, as it was agreed in Cancun five years ago. On that basis, with the agreement and contributions announced so far by almost every country, the risk that the planet's average temperature raises more than four or five degrees Celsius by the end of the century significantly decreases, as reaching such heights would generate disastrous impacts for mankind. In order to increase the odds of meeting temperature rising goals set in the Agreement, including the more ambitious ones, a profound transformation in the way we produce and consume energy and other goods needs to be fostered, and ultimately in the current development model.

To fulfill the Agreement, not only willingness will be important, but ensuring technology transfer, capacity development and additional funding, both focused on reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and adaptation to the impacts of climate change. In this regard, developed countries confirm that they will continue to lead that mobilization of resources to developing countries, looking for a gradual increase over previous efforts, most notably the Green Climate Fund and the commitment of one hundred billion dollars a year starting in

2020.

The Agreement was reached once balance was found, both among its components and in terms of responsibilities between those who have mainly contributed to the cause of the problem and have more capabilities in solving it, and those who are suffering the most severe consequences. Ideally, besides being well balanced, the Agreement must be effective, so it is essential for all those who subscribe to it to fully comply, and that progress in its implementation is measurable and verifiable, and even flexible enough to be enhanced.

It is remarkable that in climate negotiations the division and differentiation between developed and developing countries begins to be overcome, which has been so closely linked with mutual distrust. This distinction characterized the Kyoto Protocol, which ultimately proved to be very ineffective, in part precisely due to assigning quantitative emission reduction commitments only to a limited group of countries, the developed ones, when emissions from developing countries were growing very quickly, largely at the expense of consuming fossil fuels and degrading their natural resources.

To sum up, although much remains to be done, in view of the complexity of the negotiations, we recognize the great effort and the Agreement reached in Paris, and we believe that this marks a very good starting point. There are still many details to refine in order to ensure effective implementation and consolidating enough efforts, but the very fact of having achieved a new universal agreement that will lay the foundations to face climate change and address its consequences on a global scale is a political triumph and a crucial and urgent step in the right direction in ensuring humanity's progress and the survival of the species that inhabit the planet.

Although the economic cost of the measures under the Paris Agreement is significant, it is far less than the likely cost of the impacts that climate change would cause if these are not implemented. Addressing climate change decisively requires a shift towards an economy that is less intensive in pollutant emissions, more efficient use of resources, and more resistant to the impacts of climate change. These changes present the opportunity for strong economic growth, along with a number of additional associated benefits such as improved air quality, efficient mobility and more energy diversity that achieves greater social welfare.

We recognize that Mexico, taking its own responsibility in addressing climate change, has been a very active player in the negotiation and was the first developing country to present its national determined contributions by setting ambitious goals. Although some of these goals are conditioned on receiving international support and effective implementation of the multilateral agreement, it will be up to both government and society to monitor that posed commitments are met and that actions take place beyond intentions. Only then will we ensure that our country moves towards a low carbon development, which can be achieved without sacrificing economic development and even improving the competitiveness of the domestic industry. A shift in this direction will prepare us for a likely tax on carbon emissions to be adopted at an international level.

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