

Dear Minister,

time for reaching an effective new global climate change agreement is quickly running out. As you prepare to meet with European Environment Ministers on 2nd March, as part of the international networks CIDSE and Caritas, representing 173 Catholic relief and development organisations across the world, urges you to play your part in ensuring the European Union Spring Summit sends a concrete signal to the international community that the EU is ready to live up to its responsibilities as a major historical polluter and a previous climate champion. The EU can and must play a key role in raising international ambition and creating the political will and momentum necessary to achieve an agreement.

The ambiguity of the EU's position to date has played an important part in stalling the beginning of real negotiations, threatening the December 2009 deadline. The draft position now emerging contains limited and qualified commitments on support to developing countries, combined with inadequate domestic mitigation targets. The proposals thus lack environmental integrity and fail to recognise and respect the need for the new agreement to protect and promote the right of people in developing countries to their sustainable development.

Caritas and CIDSE call on the EU at Spring Summit to;

- **Commit to paying its fair share of the levels of financing necessary for climate action, by committing to financing mechanisms that will ensure secure, sufficient, accessible additional financing for climate action in developing countries, and by indicating concrete figures the EU will provide.**
- **Commit to ensuring that climate financing will be new and additional money, and will not result in the diversion of existing and committed ODA flows.**
- **Commit to releasing all funds already pledged for climate action, and to providing incremental increases in financing between 2009-2012 after which the new framework should be in place.**
- **Commit to enhancing the UN process and to ensuring that the COP remains the primary intergovernmental decision-making and governing forum on climate change.**
- **Recognise the importance of the further development, enhancement and dissemination of adaptation technologies and measures that benefit and are accessible to those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and to commit to ensuring these are supported in the post 2012 agreement.**
- **Commit to reductions at the top end of 30-40% by 2020 compared to 1990 levels and the top end of 80-95% by 2050, and to reach out to all developed countries to adopt commensurate targets in order to limit a further rise in global surface temperatures to as far below 2°C as possible.**
- **Ensure the environmental integrity of domestic and developed country targets by committing to achieving the vast majority of the 30-40% reductions domestically.**

- **Disregard the conditional sequencing implied by the Facilitative Mechanism for Mitigation Support, and to adopt a position that states clearly that developing country mitigation actions will be supported and enabled by developed countries through measurable, reportable and verifiable financial and technical support and capacity building.**

The economic downturn must not be used as an excuse for inaction. Further delay risks human and environmental costs of a proportion we cannot yet comprehend. Governments have mobilised trillions of Euro to stabilise and stimulate the economic climate over recent months because there was the political will to do so. Developed country governments must now show the same level of political will to protect millions of people in developing countries from further loss of their lives and livelihoods as a result of the global warming their actions have caused. It will not be possible to 'bail out' the climate at a later stage; action must be taken now.

The time for tactics and posturing are over. If the EU fails to deliver a clear and more ambitious position now, it risks creating an insurmountable divide between developed and developing countries and destroying any prospect of achieving a comprehensive, effective and equitable deal in Copenhagen in December.

Caritas and CIDSE believe that the multiple crises in climate, food, energy and financial systems must provoke profound reflection on the inequity and unsustainable nature of our current models of growth, production and consumption. The year ahead offers the international community the opportunity to set current and future generations on a new path. This will require a commitment to coherent and mutually reinforcing long term solutions across the policy agenda. We trust in your commitment to work constructively with government departments and with your European counterparts to ensure that this opportunity will not be missed.

Sincerely,