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Note for the attention of the Presidency
Plenary Session of the European Parliament
Strasbourg 4 - 7 February 2013

Item: Oral Question 0214/12: UN Framework convention on Climate Change
Debate foreseen: Wednesday 6 February afternoon

SPEAKING POINTS

President,
Honourable Members,

I believe that this is indeed a good moment to take stock of what happened in Doha and to look ahead, not only to the next COP in Warsaw at the end of this year but also to Paris at the end of 2015. In this context, your question is very timely.

Although it was a difficult and challenging COP, Doha managed to achieve its stated aims:

- Finalise the rules in order to make operational the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol.
- Close the track on long-term implementation of the
Convention, and

- Advance the work on the only remaining negotiating track for the coming three years, the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action or ADP.

Let's not forget that this result was achieved, thanks to the fact that the EU had a common position and spoke with one voice on all the issues, including on issues relating to the Kyoto Protocol. It is not always easy to reach such a common position among 27 Member States. But we got there, and this is what counts.

Now, the task ahead is two-fold: implementation of all the decisions that were adopted and continuation of the negotiations on the Durban Platform track. These negotiations, which should be concluded by 2015, consist of two work streams: devising the principles and structure for a post-2020 agreement, which will be legally binding for all 195 Parties to the UNFCCC, and exploring how we can increase the level of mitigation ambition between now and 2020.

These negotiations will require a lot of innovative and outside-the-box thinking since we are devising a regime that will start in 2020 and will need to provide some longer-term perspective. The debate on this new regime will be further informed by a Green Paper that the Commission will publish shortly. But Commissioner Hedegaard will, I am sure, give you more insights on that.

The various actors - EU institutions, Member States but also the private
sector and the public at large - are already starting to think about what kind of global climate regime we want to agree by 2015 for it to be in place and having effect in a post-2020 world. The EU will then need to devise how best to achieve the desired outcome by the end of 2015.

It is worth noting that two EU Member States will play a leading role in the UNFCCC process leading up to this new post-2020 climate regime since, as you know, Poland and France will be the Conference hosts in 2013 and 2015 respectively. There are expectations, and opportunities, for the EU and its Member States to play a key role in facilitating agreement and in continuing to lead an ambitious agenda to keep global temperature increases below the 2 degree threshold.

In their 18-month programme presented as the three successive Presidencies, Ireland, Lithuania and Greece have committed themselves to preparing and coordinating the EU's position effectively within their respective semesters.

The Council will establish the EU position for the Warsaw Conference by October this year. In this context and as has been the case in previous years, we very much look forward to the valuable input from the European Parliament.