



Climate Action Network-International

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To Patricia Espinosa

UNFCCC Executive Secretary

Martin-Luther-King-Strasse 8

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Germany

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INTRODUCING CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

Dear Madame Secretary,

CAN is delighted to welcome you as new UNFCCC Executive Secretary, and is encouraged by the wealth of knowledge and experience you bring to this position. As you know, it is a crucial time for action on climate change. With the diplomatic success of the Paris Agreement behind us, we are now moving to implementation at the international and national levels. We see your role not just as the UNFCCC Executive Secretary but as a champion for the issue, ensuring synergy in climate action across different UN agencies as well as reaching further and beyond to constituencies who are yet to engage with the issue of climate change and who are important to finding solutions.

CAN would like to highlight a few key issues that we as a network feel are important for a successful and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Urgency of action: CAN has been advocating for a 1.5°C threshold for a long time and was amongst the first to call for a global goal in the Paris Agreement to phase out fossil fuel emissions and phase in 100% renewable energy as early as possible, but no later than 2050. Countries have now submitted their INDCs but according to the synthesis report by the UNFCCC Secretariat they are not sufficiently ambitious, and will consume the entire 1.5°C carbon budget by 2025. CAN is very concerned by the lack of ambition exhibited by countries around the urgency of action that is required if we are to ensure that we stay within the 1.5°C threshold. CAN thus asks that you play a central role in ensuring that we overcome the current complacency about closing that gap in earnest

and encourage all countries to increase ambition of their national actions and their efforts to scale-up support to countries who require it.

The success of the Paris Agreement is not in implementing technical and procedural provisions, but hinges on the ambition exhibited by countries, their consistency with the 1.5°C limit, and the transformative change this ambition catalyses within countries. Merely signing an agreement is not enough, we need countries to increase ambition exponentially if we are to meet the agreed objectives of the Paris Agreement. We believe both the technical examinations of mitigation and adaptation opportunities under the UNFCCC and the interplay between states and non-state actors in the Global Climate Action Agenda can contribute to near term action (pre 2020) on the ground, granted that the resulting initiatives are environmentally sound and additional. CAN encourages you to engage in these processes, with the High-Level Champions, to make sure they get the proper attention and have the necessary support from the UNFCCC secretariat.

Facilitative Dialogues in 2016 and 2018 and Global Stocktake in 2023: In the Paris Agreement there are three key decisions taken to ensure longevity of action and enhanced ambition across all elements of the agreement. CAN believes these to be among the most important institutional elements of the Paris Agreement, that will enable ambition to be scaled up over time and help in identifying the gaps that need to be closed to achieve accelerated implementation. CAN believes that necessary attention needs to be paid to ensuring the success of these facilitative dialogues and to designing the modalities for the global stocktake alongside rapid increase of ambition in the short term from countries. For CAN, the core objectives of these moments are to enhance political momentum and increase ambition. We believe that the choreography for these moments needs to be designed far ahead of time to ensure success. Your role in designing this choreography will be key. CAN would be measuring the success of these facilitated dialogues from the perspective of additional gigaton reductions carried out by countries as a result of these facilitated dialogues.

Enhanced Civil Society Participation & Engagement: Civil society plays a pivotal role at the national and international level on design and implementation of effective climate policies. We as CAN would like to highlight our concerns around shrinking civil society space at the international level particularly within UNFCCC. It is unacceptable that for the last few years, UNFCCC has increased the number of closed meetings in informal negotiation settings. UNFCCC is moving away from the historic good practice of negotiating sessions being open to civil society. We would urge you to take up this matter and ensure that UNFCCC adheres to the principles enshrined in the Aarhus Convention. Civil Society will play a key role in getting countries to revise their inadequate NDCs and will be crucial for creating the necessary public momentum for increased political will around key moments like 2018 facilitative dialogue. The successful implementation of the Paris Agreement is directly proportional to the space provided for civil society participation and engagement.

CAN is looking forward to working with you and building this next phase of the global climate regime. We request a face to face meeting with you around the sidelines of Climate Week in New York to introduce the network and its members to you. We are confident of building a strong and fruitful working relationship with you and again congratulate you on your new and challenging role.

Sincerely,

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