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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: European climate diplomacy after COP21: Elements for continued climate diplomacy in 2016

Following the meeting of PSC on 3 February 2016, it was agreed that the joint paper by the Commission Services/EEAS on "European climate diplomacy after COP21: Elements for continued climate diplomacy in 2016" should serve as a basis for the discussion of the issue at the meeting of the Council (Foreign Affairs) on 15 February 2016.

It is therefore suggested that COREPER (Part II), at its meeting on 10 February 2016, takes note of the paper which appears in the annex to this note and forwards it to the Council (Foreign Affairs).

European climate diplomacy after COP21:
Elements for continued climate diplomacy in 2016

A/ Scene Setter

At COP21 in Paris, the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal delivered on EU priorities, brings about ambition, commitment and solidarity, and complements the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Agenda Action Agenda on financing for development, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Paris Agreement provides the framework for decisively accelerating the global transition to a climate resilient, low carbon future and contains substantial provisions on financial and technical support to address needs related to adaptation and loss and damage from climate change impacts.

The EU's leadership ahead of and during COP21, including through its collective diplomatic outreach under the framework of the 2015 climate diplomacy action plan, contributed to the positive outcome. The EU and its Member States (MS) leveraged their strong track record of domestic climate action and international support to engage in a broad "High Ambition Coalition" across different regional groupings thereby breaking away from the bifurcated and largely outdated approach to dividing responsibilities between developed and developing countries. This played a critical role in shifting negotiations dynamics at the crucial stage of COP21.

Maintaining the positive momentum from Paris will require sustained political and diplomatic mobilisation in support of the EU's climate objectives. The focus will now turn to ensuring that the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs), submitted by almost all Parties, will be implemented and ambition increased over time in order to meet well below 2 degrees long-term goal agreed in Paris.

The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) Conclusions on climate diplomacy in July 2015 invited the High Representative and the Commission "to report back in early 2016 the outcome of the COP21 and its implications for climate diplomacy as well as propose further actions". This paper outlines proposed areas of focus for 2016.

B/ Continued climate diplomacy in 2016: three strands to build on Paris

As an integral part of EU foreign policy and global strategy, climate diplomacy must continue to mobilise the international community to address the cross cutting causes and consequences of climate change as an integral part of its strategic priorities.

The Paris Agreement is an important part of the framework for addressing and financing sustainable development. Action on climate change is necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the EU must realise synergies between development and disaster risk reduction and climate objectives.

The Paris Agreement has left open a range of technical issues. These include detailed provisions on transparency and accountability, low-carbon strategies for 2050, the follow-up to the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) and technology mechanisms. COP22, scheduled for 7-18 November 2016 in Marrakech, will therefore be important to show progress on these issues.

Foreign Ministry officials should continue political outreach to third countries at government level as well as to the wider public on the meaning of the climate agreement and the work it currently entails. Building on the successful 2015 climate diplomacy action plan, continued EU climate diplomacy must reflect the lessons learnt and best practices from last year. The world's largest diplomatic network, of circa 3,000 EU and MS delegations and embassies, was collaboratively mobilised with clear added-value. This gave the EU and MS a collective influence greater than the sum of their parts.

The experience, networks and working methods developed among the EU and MS during 2015 should be harnessed in 2016 and beyond, delivering a high-level of service and enhancing collective capacity to deliver climate action objectives. The EU institutions and MS will continue to cooperate and coordinate closely. The strands of action below provide a framework for climate diplomacy in 2016. A detailed work plan with more specific action points will be developed and revised by the EU and MS at working level throughout the year.

Climate diplomacy action in 2016 should closely be linked to the other major EU strands of work, such as the EU-Council assessment of the COP21 outcome, in particular in view of: the EU 2030 climate and energy package; the upcoming EU's "Global Strategy"; follow up to the SDGs and Agenda 2030 and the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction; and the adopted EU energy diplomacy action plan¹. Scope for further synergies should be examined and developed with areas such as economic diplomacy and policies on trade, neighbourhood, enlargement and development and humanitarian aid.

Strand one: Continue to advocate climate change as a strategic priority in diplomatic dialogues, public diplomacy and external policy instruments.

Post-COP21, sustained political and diplomatic mobilisation is required to maintain the positive momentum, implement the agreement and accelerate the global transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy. The EU should make sure that climate change and the implementation of COP21 commitments feature prominently in key international fora, including the G20 and G7, and in bilateral and bi-regional dialogues in 2016 and beyond.

¹ Council conclusions on Energy Diplomacy 10995/15

As a bloc of 28 MS coordinating action on key international policies², the EU enjoys significant soft power. It can better mainstream climate diplomacy through the concerted mobilization of its instruments of external action (both at EU and MS levels) in pursuit of ambitious climate action and resilience building. This includes emphasising the link between climate action and international development policy under the SDG framework and the Addis Ababa agenda for development financing, and increasing cooperation on neighbourhood and enlargement policy, civil protection and humanitarian policy, and trade (such as the WTO agenda and the Addis Ababa agenda for development financing), among others. Climate change must remain a particular priority in bilateral and bi-regional dialogues, the G7, the G20, at the UN, and in other international fora.

Particular support should be given to the negotiations in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to address GHG emissions, as well as support the Montreal Protocol negotiations on the hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) amendment.

Strand two: Support implementation of the Paris Agreement, in the context of low-emission and climate resilient development.

Climate diplomacy efforts should initially focus on understanding key countries' views on the Paris outcome, encouraging the timely ratification of the agreement, and ensuring our partners are ready to implement their commitments and work towards strengthening ambition over time. The EU must be ready to assist partner countries where required. This includes assistance through innovative climate financing schemes since private finance is crucial to bridging the financing gap and scaled up support for the implementation of pledged Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) in third countries.

² Including trade, international development, humanitarian aid/crisis management, transport, climate change, energy, research and innovation, and energy.

In the context of the 20% EU wide budget target for climate action, cooperation and coordination between EEAS, CLIMA, DEVCO, NEAR, ECHO, and MS development agencies should be strengthened in this area to maximise synergies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Paris Agreement recognises the special vulnerabilities of the least developed countries and small island developing states, and financial and capacity building support will be required for these partners. However, climate diplomacy efforts should also include those developed and middle income countries that will also face political, technical and/or financial challenges in implementing their INDCs.

Strand three: Increase efforts to address the nexus between climate, natural resources, prosperity, stability and migration.

Climate change is a powerful "threat multiplier", and the EU and MS must enhance work to address its direct and indirect international impacts. As part of its global security strategy, the EU should tackle at country and regional level the strategic and multifaceted threat posed by climate change.

The potentially destabilising impacts of climate change must also continue to be directly addressed with partner countries³. The links with water diplomacy and other EU and MS initiatives' are encouraged. Climate change is one of the underlying root causes of displacement, irregular migration resulting from state fragility, insecurity and resource scarcity. By further analysing climate vulnerability links with fragility and security risk, and conducting risk assessment for disasters and crises, the EU will be able to better identify areas where combined risks are particularly high and where there are critical opportunities for conflict prevention and resilience. Practical support for mitigation and adaptation policies through the implementation of comprehensive low emission economic development strategies should be a key part of the wider EU response to the migration challenge.

Annexes:

1. Elements for climate diplomacy action in 2016
2. Overview and lessons learnt: climate diplomacy actions in 2015

³ Including on food security, reliable access to resources, water and energy, spread of epidemic disease, and social and economic instability.

Annex: Elements for climate diplomacy action in 2016

The specific elements for action below are intended to provide an overview of suggested activity. A detailed work plan with specific action points will be developed by the EU and MS at working level via the Green Diplomacy Network.

Action under strand one: Continue to advocate climate change as a strategic priority in diplomatic dialogues, public diplomacy and external policy instruments.

- The EU and MS will use forthcoming bilateral meetings and multilateral fora, including the G7, the G20 and the UN, to make the case for continued momentum on climate action, and work with partners to create the conditions for positive action and prevent any backsliding.
- The EU and MS will fully integrate into their collective climate diplomacy priorities the objective of reaching an international agreement on a Global Market Based Mechanism to govern future GHG emissions for international aviation at the ICAO Assembly in September 2016, give climate diplomacy support on negotiations of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) with the objective of adopting a global system of collection of data on fuel consumption and associated GHG emissions from international shipping in April 2016, and reach an agreement on the HFCs amendment under the Montreal Protocol
- Conduct collective high-level outreach via EU Delegations and Member State Embassies at appropriate intervals. These should focus on key decision makers and agents of change, including not only host Governments but also parliamentarians, non-government organisations, green industries and wider civil society. Such outreach should be linked to the policy dialogue with developing countries supported by the Global Climate Change Alliance + flagship.
- Build on the successful experiences in 2015 to enhance collective public diplomacy in host countries. For example, EU Delegations and MS embassies should collaboratively organise an enhanced "Climate Diplomacy Action Day" in 2016, and targeted outreach could be timed to coincide with the planned UN signature ceremony of the Paris agreement on 22 April 2016, and the Olympic Games.

Actions under strand two: Support implementation of the Paris Agreement, in the context low-emission and climate resilient development.

- The EU and MS should work with partners to develop a full understanding of the content of INDCs, support partners in developing implementation plans, and make links to appropriate financial and technical support, in particular that provided mainly to Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States by the Global Climate Change Alliance + flagship. EU diplomatic services should be mobilised to encourage timely ratification.
- The EU and MS will further mainstream climate diplomacy through the concerted mobilization of their instruments of external action (including cooperation for development, neighbourhood and enlargement policies, civil protection and humanitarian policy, trade, etc.) to support ambitious climate action and strengthen resilience including through capacity building. This will include enhancing strategic collaboration with non-state actors in the context of the Lima-Paris Action Agenda.
- The EU and MS will continue to work together in exploring innovative mechanisms for mobilising additional climate finance from private investors. (For example the "Nordic finance initiative" launched by the countries of the Nordic Council at COP21.)
- COP22 in Marrakesh will be crucial for establishing practical details for implementing the Paris Agreement. An EU démarche in the run up to COP22 could explain EU views and seek support from partner countries on specific issues for Marrakesh.

Actions under strand three: Increase efforts to address the nexus between climate, natural resources, prosperity and stability.

- EU and MS will enhance their involvement in the climate and security policy debate at international fora, including the UN Security Council (encouraging the update of the 2009 paper by the SG), the Planetary Security Conference organised by the Netherlands, and other relevant conferences/initiatives organised by MS.
- The EU and those MS who are part of the G7 will continue engagement via the G7 on climate and fragility, acting on the findings of the G7 report on this subject.
- EU and MS will continue and enhance the inclusion of climate vulnerability analysis into fragility/security and disasters risk assessments and collaborate on the resulting risk-mitigation efforts, via all appropriate external policy instruments and in collaboration with established networks.
- The EU will continue its work under the joint EU-UNEP initiative and project on climate and security which specifically address the destabilizing effects of climate change in fragile states.
- The EU and Member States are encouraged to explore the possibility of developing a list of actions on climate & security.

Annex: Overview and lessons learnt: climate diplomacy actions in 2015

1) Climate diplomacy actions in 2015

The world's largest diplomatic network in action

1. The EU has the world's largest diplomatic network consisting of circa 3,000 EU Delegations and Member State embassies and circa 90,000 diplomats
2. Throughout 2015 the EU has collectively mobilised this network to get the most ambitious deal possible in Paris

European climate diplomacy successes in 2015

1. High-level outreach, démarches and public diplomacy: In dialogue with host countries we mobilized throughout 2015 with MS hundreds of European diplomats:
 - a. In March we targeted ca. 65 countries via our "INDCs demarche" to come forward with their INDCs. At the beginning of COP21 most countries had delivered their INDCs also thanks to European climate diplomacy.
 - b. On 17 June, Climate Diplomacy Action Day took place in ca. 50 countries. Delegations and MS embassies organized a wide variety of public events.
 - c. In June "Heads of Mission reports" on climate change were provided on ca. 35 targeted countries
 - d. In September/October public climate outreach events took place in 45 countries with a focus on developing countries and highlighted EU and host country cooperation
 - e. In October/November targeted high-level outreach/démarche was carried out in ca. 70 countries in preparation of COP21
2. Global European climate diplomacy from Colombia to Korea took place:
 - a. European diplomats boarding the symbolic "train to Paris" in Bogota
 - b. EU Ambassadors joining the People's Climate March in Seoul

Further actions undertaken in 2015

1. Letter by HRVP Mogherini and Commissioner Arias-Cañete to all Heads of Delegations (March and December)
2. Throughout 2015: public speeches, articles, op-eds by EU leaders on climate diplomacy were delivered
3. Tools used:
 - European internal online platform for document sharing "Agora"
 - Documents and narratives
 - Events
 - Training (e.g. best practice of German MFA offering their 1 week training to EU colleagues)

2) Lessons learnt for enhancing EU climate diplomacy in 2016

1. Ensure better flow of information, in particular from delegations and embassies to Brussels and MS capitals, e.g. by turning Agora into a two-way platform
2. Systematically enhance sharing of information between EU delegations and MS embassies in partner countries so as to improve efficiency and effectiveness of climate outreach, through formalized local GDN meetings, climate change focal points for MS embassies.
3. Address training needs of delegations, also in view of frequent rotation, e.g. through a variety of regularly held briefing formats
4. Integrate climate policy as a priority in broader dialogues and meetings, e.g. the yearly HoD meeting or regional conferences of delegations
5. Make available further materials for outreach, both of ready-to-share (e.g. press kit, infographics) and preparatory nature (e.g. event blueprints including expert rosters)