

## Uniting for Climate Action – Putting the Paris Agreement into Practice

Key messages from the speakers at the briefing in the Federal Environment Ministry on 20 October 2017 in the run-up to COP23

Prof. Gernot Klepper, Environment and Natural Resources Research Team, Institute for the World Economy, Kiel University

The Paris Agreement as an opportunity for a climate-friendly future

1. Since all national actions to protect the climate are taken on a voluntary basis, it is crucial for the international community to be informed about how much individual countries are doing to meet the Paris targets. The greatest possible degree of transparency will also generate public moral pressure to adjust contributions to meet the goals set out in the Paris Agreement.
2. All countries should, in their own interest, take action to combat climate change, since it is becoming ever clearer that one significant cost of using fossil fuels is local environmental damage and adverse impacts on the health of the local population.
3. Nobody predicted how fast the cost of renewable energy would fall. Ten years ago, electricity from solar and wind power was still highly subsidised; today it is one of the cheapest forms of energy. Its cost will be reduced by a further 30 to 50 percent over the next few years.
4. Many firms worldwide have realised that the future does not lie in fossil fuels. The stock exchange value of the major coal and oil firms has decreased, in some cases dramatically, whilst pioneering renewable energy companies have been given high stock market valuations.
5. Nevertheless, many governments have responded to political pressure from the fossil fuel lobby which wants to preserve the current energy system for as long as possible. They are not thereby acting in the interests of a majority of their citizens and most definitely not in the interest of future generations. Governments should actively support the energy transition with a rigorous climate policy, thus giving shape to a climate-friendly future.

Daniel Schneider, Environmental and Climate Policy Officer in the Department for Structural, Industry and Service Policy of the German Trade Union Confederation

### **International trade union movement demands for COP23 in Bonn**

1. Be more ambitious – harness climate change’s potential for job creation  
COP23 has to deliver with respect to concrete initiatives to reduce emissions even before 2020.  
Sound, democratic modalities have to be agreed on for the Facilitative Dialogue 2018, which is to form the basis for the five-yearly review cycle. Future review mechanisms must further define the goal of remaining well below a 2°C temperature rise on the basis of scientific findings on climate change, with democratic participation by all groups and respecting the principle of fairness.
2. Make available climate finance and support for the most vulnerable countries  
COP23 must provide certainty as to how the climate commitments can be reached. Sufficient financial resources must be made available to foster population resilience to the impacts of climate change, to support efforts to reduce emissions and to facilitate a fair transition to a zero-carbon economy. The present commitments to mobilise 100 billion US dollars per year until 2020 should serve as both a basis and stimulus for financing post-2020.
3. Campaign for a just transition for the workforce and their communities  
The Paris Agreement took a first step towards promising that the transition would not impact unfairly on the workforce. COP23 must underpin this promise by calling on all stakeholders to incorporate elements of “Just Transition” in their NDCs and to recommend future work on this issue by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (STBA). This is imperative if we are to successfully address the challenges posed by industrial change in all sectors and in particular with respect to the jobs and livelihoods for those currently working in emission-intensive industries. National contributions and road maps for zero-carbon development are crucial if we want to build a long-term vision and formulate sound plans for the transformation of our economies and the promotion of sustainable investment in the medium and longer term.

Prof. Peter Höpfe, Head of Geo Risks Research, Munich Re

1. The people in the poorest countries are those most affected by climate change. As a rule, they do not have access to insurance, and even if they did, few could afford adequate coverage.
2. Intelligent and efficient insurance solutions, supported by those responsible for causing climate change, will increase the resilience of economies and societies in these countries.

Ingrid-Gabriela Hoven, Directorate-General for Global Issues, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

1. The impacts of climate change pose an existential threat to the world's poorest already today. In order to change this, we not only need to base the global economy on renewable energy. It is equally vital to channel investment into adaptation measures such as drought-resistant crops, sustainable drainage systems and coastal protection. Where the threat of climate change nonetheless continues to rise, we need to find clever ways of managing residual risk, for example through climate risk insurance.
2. In order to speed up the development and scaling-up of sustainable solutions for increasing the resilience of the poorest, we need to join forces in powerful alliances with all relevant actors. Germany is leading by example on this, e.g. with the NDC Partnership and the InsuResilience Global Partnership.