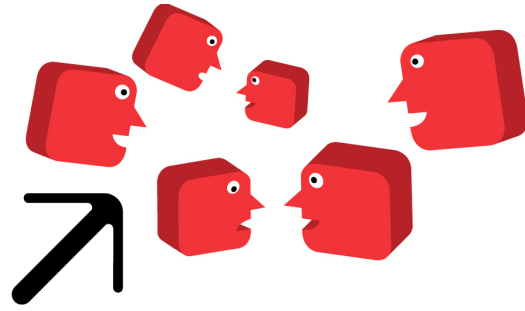




PES Council

Sofia, 22-23 November 2007



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## **COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE FROM A PLANETARY EMERGENCY TO A GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY**

### **We must act now**

The future of human civilization is at unprecedented risk. Scientific evidence has put an end to the debate on global warming, notwithstanding the repetitive denials from the European Right. Carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions must be sharply reduced worldwide in order to prevent climate change which, unchecked, will have devastating consequences for the environment, for human life, for the world economy, and for future generations.

We need to act - and act now. Because we can beat climate change. We already possess much of the technology to do it. The question is one of political will. We need to forge a global progressive alliance against climate change and take action at all levels, from each and every individual through national action to international and common action by all states together.

As Europeans, we must show leadership. We must continue to build momentum for the December Climate Change negotiations in Bali. And we must accelerate and intensify our efforts to curb our own emissions.

As Socialists, Social Democrats and Progressive Democrats, we must show the political direction. We know that the markets won't get it right alone. They need political guidance and economic incentives to change course. We will be at the forefront of the efforts to develop a progressive strategy to combating climate change.

For Socialists, tackling climate change is part and parcel of the fight for global justice. The poorest sections of society are already paying the price of climate change, particularly in the developing world where severe weather conditions, floods and droughts, are destroying livelihoods. But even in richer countries, it is often the poor who cannot afford to insure themselves against floods or fire damage. And every taxpayer has to foot the bill when public infrastructure is damaged and insurance premiums go up.

The next two years will be decisive in framing the fight against climate change. The window of opportunity for avoiding the worst effects of climate change is slowly closing.



## **We must all contribute**

Responsibilities for the climate crisis are widespread, especially in the richer parts of the world. This is why we fully support Europe's ambitious CO2 reduction goals. The EU should take the lead in tackling climate change.

The world needs a common global front against climate change at UN level. We appeal to our international partners to seize the opportunity provided by the Bali conference in December to achieve a real breakthrough on the way to a new, fair and truly effective, global agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol from 2012 onwards.

- Emerging economies must be part of this agreement, but this will require a fair burden sharing among nations.
- The EU must also show leadership in this respect, by championing a global partnership for finance, the exchange of best practise for energy efficiency, and technology transfer.
- Developing economies also need to combine necessary economic growth and social progress with increasingly responsible and effective environmental policies. They need support to do so.

The ambitious goals on CO2 reduction, clean energies and energy efficiency will require tough political decisions. We will do our utmost to ensure that these political decisions are taken and put into action wherever we are part of policy- and decision-making positions at all levels of governance, from European to national and from regional to local. In particular we have to ensure that our policies are coherent and that we have the necessary policy-instruments (e.g. a really sustainable transport policy) at hand to meet our goals.

But tough political decisions will not be enough. We all need to get involved because fighting climate change, even with small daily acts, must become part of our way of life. Governments can help by launching extensive information campaigns carried out at grassroots level and by policies stimulating an energy shift in all our member states. Equally, we appeal to the European business community to become an active and responsible partner in this battle, by contributing to turn Europe into the world's leading low-carbon economy.

We support the forming of a European oil forum where representatives from the member states, the European Commission, the scientific community, the industry, agricultural and environmental organisations could come together and discuss what is needed to do at the European level to break our dependence on oil.

## **A choice of new possibilities: A global roadmap for action on the climate, sustainable growth and decent jobs**

The battle against climate change is not only an environmental, but also an economic and social imperative. Act now and we can develop a new policy direction for climate policy based on smart, green growth combined with new and better jobs.

The choice is not therefore between fighting climate change or promoting growth, jobs and social progress. The fight against climate change, for the protection of the entire ecosystem, and for the welfare of future generations can and must unleash new sustainable growth and decent jobs.

What we need is a global roadmap for action. The transition to a low-carbon and sustainable development path can only be achieved through a coordinated international



effort enshrined in a fair and effective global agreement. Within the framework of this agreement, all governments must put in place adequate national and European policies and agree to mitigate the impact of future climate change and to adapt international policies in order to moderate adverse impacts and/or realise opportunities associated with climate change. A credible roadmap must include both mitigation and adaptation policies. The issue of mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions has so far dominated the climate change agenda, but it is becoming more and more obvious that adaptation will be necessary to address impacts resulting from the warming which is already unavoidable due to past emissions. Future action to combat climate change must include at least seven key elements:

- a global long-term goal of keeping the rise in average global temperatures below 2°C;
- concrete, binding intermediate targets for the reduction of CO2 emissions in all industrialised countries and for the limitation of CO2 emission increases in emerging economies in line with a reduction of global CO2 emissions by at least 50% by 2050 compared to the 1990 level;
- effective global, regional and national policies for an adequate pricing of carbon in the framework of a truly relevant international emissions trading system;
- national, regional and global deployment of clean technologies on a massive scale, first and foremost in the production and use of energy in all its forms. This will require new policies and financial support mechanisms to spur investment in research, development and innovation, not least in Europe, as well as a global partnership to accelerate and finance necessary technology transfers to developing economies;
- a new global partnership against poverty, reflecting the new challenges to the trade regime, to development policy and to the financing of development posed by the impacts of climate change in poorer countries and the rising costs of necessary adaptation and mitigation policies.
- a new environmental approach for European Union Association Agreements
- strengthened mechanisms for adaptation, with special attention to water resources.

### **We can all win by beating climate change**

Climate change is a major threat. But tackling it could throw up a new global opportunity. As it forces us to change the world's unsustainable production and consumption patterns, it provides us with a unique window of opportunity to re-direct the world onto a sustainable development path.

Our generation has the duty and the privilege to lay the foundations for a better world - a world of peace, of fairness, of solidarity among peoples and generations, of responsible management of the future of our planet by all levels of governance. Socialists and social democrats will be at the forefront of political efforts to lay these foundations