Parliamentary Assembly
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Resolution 2210 (2018)[1]

Climate change and implementation of the Paris Agreement

Parliamentary Assembly

1. By signing the Paris Agreement in December 2015, 194 countries of the United Nations and the European Union recognised climate change as an existential threat to humanity: there is no planet "B", and the health of our planet is key to our own prosperity. The entry into force of the agreement just one year after its signature was a remarkable sign of the global community's resolve to act deeply and widely, moving towards a "bottom-up" approach as opposed to the "top-down" logic pursued previously. Despite the recent withdrawal of the United States federal administration, over 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions remain covered by nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement. However, to stop global temperatures from rising more than 2°C by 2050, additional efforts are required over the next decade.

2. The Parliamentary Assembly hails European leadership in steering the global process to prevent the planet from "overheating". Cleaner, more sustainable development is the only way to correctly accommodate the needs of the present and future generations, wherever they live. Considering that developing countries are most severely affected by climate change, although they bear much less responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions than developed countries, more solidarity between developed and developing countries is needed to share know-how, (financial) resources and clean technologies, especially with the small island developing States (as agreed in the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA Pathway)).

3. The Assembly therefore believes that implementation of the Paris Agreement should go hand in hand with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the global community in the same year. It refers to the ample evidence showing that investment in more environmentally friendly development and global sustainable policies makes good economic sense, as well as being a responsible policy choice for the future. Worldwide, the cost of extreme climatic events continues to increase, as does the cost of inaction: in Europe, the cost of damage incurred from climatic disasters doubled between the 1980s and the 2000s, totalling as much as €436 billion according to the European Environment Agency.

4. The Assembly welcomes the launch of the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action with a view to the implementation of the Paris Agreement. This strategy aims to involve multiple actors in pro-climate action: it supports voluntary collaboration of civil society, the private sector, financial institutions, local and subnational authorities, and local communities, as applicable. In this context, urban, estuarial and island development models deserve special support so as to tap the huge potential of green growth in serving both the population and the climate cause, as well as low-carbon growth and renewable energies.

5. Mainstreaming sustainable development and resilience to climate change in national policies through law remains a considerable challenge for European countries. The Assembly regrets that official national delegations to global climate change meetings (COPs) rarely include parliamentarians and urges European countries to lead the change by example and systematically include parliamentarians in their delegations. Closer involvement of legislators should enable better policy coherence with a view to honouring domestic and international commitments under the Paris Agreement, ensuring a more balanced allocation of budgetary resources, and putting into place the legislative framework for green investment.

1. *Assembly debate* on 24 April 2018 (13th Sitting) (see Doc. 14521, report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Mr John Prescott). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 24 April 2018 (13th Sitting).

6. In the light of the above considerations, the Assembly calls for strong national measures to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement at all levels of governance. It invites the member States to:

6.1. draw up an ambitious national strategy accompanied by a concrete action plan, built and implemented with the active and direct participation of regional authorities, for mainstreaming the SDGs, in particular where they relate to climate change concerns, across the main policy fields;

6.2. draft a national capital-raising plan detailing the financial resources to be mobilised in order to implement the above-mentioned action plan, considering both national and international funding sources, thus providing certainty to domestic and foreign investors, and making the most of the growth potential of sustainable development;

6.3. hold regular consultations with different stakeholders (civil society, the private sector, financial and academic institutions, local and subnational authorities, and local communities) to monitor progress in cutting emissions and adapting to the negative impacts of climate change, and to identify problem areas that hinder the realisation of nationally determined contributions;

6.4. take advantage of regional opportunities for exchanges of good practice and co-investment in climate-friendly development models under the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action;

6.5. make pledges and honour their commitments towards replenishing the Green Climate Fund set up under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2010, in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities;

6.6. advance the transition to the circular economy, devise incentives for both public and private sectors to re-use materials at the end of the product cycle, and establish ambitious national recycling targets for 2030 and 2050;

6.7. promote a sustainable urbanisation vision by pursuing smart-city policies to turn European cities into global leaders in attracting sustainable investment, with special attention to energy efficiency in buildings, the means for cutting greenhouse gas emissions from transport, district heating and cooling, renewable energy generation, waste management and sustainable, innovative industrial activities;

6.8. map out the transition to more sustainable, innovative farming practices so that the use of natural resources is optimised, value-added generation is maximised, European biodiversity is protected, and greenhouse gas emissions are significantly reduced or captured and diverted to other uses;

6.9. foster participation of the private sector – through both voluntary and binding measures – to ensure that it contributes its fair share to achieving domestic climate goals;

6.10. restructure their energy production and consumption in such a way that fossil materials are increasingly diverted to non-energy uses and gradually replaced by renewable energy sources;

6.11. foster the adoption of ambitious measures on green public procurement, reinforcing the role of the public sector in creating a market pull for low-carbon, innovative solutions and reinforcing the role of Europe's industry in providing those solutions;

6.12. secure the involvement of national parliamentarians in global climate negotiations and in prior governmental consultations on the national negotiating position;

6.13. where feasible, consider joining the European Union Emissions Trading System following the example of non-European Union countries that have already done so;

6.14. assure gender-responsive climate policy by implementing the Gender Action Plan as agreed by the COP23.

7. The Assembly stresses the importance of parliamentary action in relation to the above measures. It believes that legislators of the parties to the Paris Agreement have the duty to check that the five-year roadmap for assessing national climate policies is on track and in line with the agreed national targets. The Assembly therefore calls on national parliaments to ensure that dedicated structures, mechanisms and resources are in place for stepping up national efforts on climate change.

8. Finally, the Assembly urges the three member States (the Russian Federation, San Marino and Turkey) that have not yet ratified the Paris Agreement to do so at the earliest opportunity.