

Speech by Cuban First Vice President at Paris Climate Conference COP21



President Francois Hollande;

Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon;

Distinguished Heads of State and Government, delegates and guests;

Mr. President:

Allow me first and foremost to express the condolences of the people and government of Cuba to the people and government of France for the victims of the atrocious terrorist attacks in Paris.

Twenty-three years have passed since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, where the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, warned that, and I quote, “An important biological species is in danger of disappearing given the rapid and progressive destruction of its natural habitat: humankind.” Already then, he foresaw that the only real and just solution would result from changing the patterns of production and consumption that emerged

from the former colonial powers, imperial policies that led to backwardness and poverty for the vast majority of humanity, in addition to the promotion of a more just and equitable international economic order.

Today, this is still a prerequisite to stabilizing the global temperature in the range of 1.5°C, as we, the small island developing states, who are on the front line of the fight against global climate change, justifiably demand.

Cuba attends this Conference to advocate for an agreement based on more effective implementation of the Framework Convention of the United Nations. The Paris agreement must entail a firm global commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, and establishing a renewed framework for international cooperation to ensure the provision and increase of resources and technology transfer, in order that developing countries can comply with the provisions of the agreement.

The effects of climate change can not be fought by hindering the development of those who most need it, or national efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger in an extended area of our shared planet.

Mr. President:

Humanity has placed its hopes in the results of this Conference, which should lead to a fair and balanced agreement, without retreating from the commitment and leadership of developed countries, who should assume their historical responsibility with resolve and proportionality.

If 23 years ago it was almost too late to do what we should have done long ago, today it is immoral to continue postponing strengthened international action to address the effects of global climate change. We, the developing countries, with the required support, will do our part in this struggle, which is also our own.

Thank you.

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