

## **Bonn COP 23 to Katowice COP 24: ETUC priorities for international climate negotiations in 2018**

Adopted at the Executive Committee of 13 and 14 December 2017

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### **Context**

In December 2015, the adoption of the Paris Agreement framed the international action against climate change for the post-2020 period. Countries committed to keep the temperature rise well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels and to continue efforts to keep the increase in global temperature below 1.5°C. Countries also committed to reach a balance between anthropogenic sources and removal of greenhouse gas emissions in the second half of this century. To fulfil that collective ambition, countries will have to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every 5 years. By 2023, a global stocktake will review these contributions to evaluate whether the collective efforts of countries are in line with the temperature objectives they committed to in the Paris Agreement. As a first attempt to assess the global efforts of parties, countries agreed to organise a “Facilitative Dialogue” as of 2018. In that respect, it must be recalled that the current NDCs are far from the level of ambition that would be compatible with the Paris Agreement temperature objectives, (we are heading for an increase of 2.7-3.7°C), while the devastating impact of climate change, droughts, floods, hurricanes, food shortages, climate migrations are causing millions of victims. This also highlights the importance of dramatically increasing efforts for pre-2020 climate action.

The Paris Agreement only provides the main features of the new international climate governance and countries have been negotiating its working arrangements since 2016 at the COP 22 that took place in Marrakesh. Countries have agreed to finalise the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement by 2018 at COP 24 and important steps in that direction were made at COP 23 in Bonn.

Since 2018 will be an important year for international climate negotiations and since COP 24 will take place in Poland, in the EU, it is worth the ETUC starting the coming year with a clear mandate defining its main goals and demands for international climate negotiations in 2018. The aim of this short document is therefore to identify the key demands of the ETUC for international climate negotiations in 2018, bearing in mind that some of these demands will be further elaborated by the ETUC and its affiliates, and in close cooperation with the ITUC, later in 2018.

### **Implementation guidelines**

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The Paris Agreement implementation guidelines to be adopted in 2018 are of the utmost importance for the future of the global climate regime. First and foremost, given the urgency of climate action, the system must be up and running in 2020. Delaying the adoption of the guidelines would jeopardise the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement and weaken its political status. This is not an option.

As far as mitigation is concerned, NDCs must be developed in a way that will ensure countries provide all the data necessary to assess the aggregated impact of NDCs on emissions levels. NDCs must therefore use a standardised accounting methodology reflecting the best available scientific knowledge and covering all the anthropogenic sources and emissions removals. NDCs must also ensure the comparability of efforts between countries.

Countries must base their targets on historical verified emissions and not on projections. Countries must submit targets corresponding to a percentage of emission levels in a common reference year, and to be reached by the same year. Countries must also use a common approach as to the inclusion of land use in their emissions accounting methodology. Comparability is a crucial aspect to avoid and counter free-riding and the effects it might have on carbon-intensive industries in front-runner countries. Cooperative approaches as referred to in article 6 should apply the same standards in terms of transparency and they must fully respect the SDGs as well as human rights. Guidelines must also incentivise the goal of closing the ambition gap as identified by the “UNEP Emissions Gap Report”. In that respect, the modalities of the global stocktake must prepare a real collective assessment of efforts made and the technical information produced must be translated into concrete and immediate political commitments and actions.

Climate action cannot be limited to reducing emissions. Other aspects such as adaptation, provision of finance to the most vulnerable countries, transfer of technologies and capacity building, investment to create quality employment, decent work and just transition are crucial aspects of climate action. NDCs and related planning on reporting commitments must reflect that and the same requirements in terms of transparency and quality of data must apply to these aspects as well. NDCs must also translate the specific responsibility of richer countries into concrete action to support poorest and most vulnerable countries, those most affected by the devastating impact of climate change.

## **Facilitative Dialogue**

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At COP 23, the “Facilitative dialogue” foreseen in the decision adopted in Paris in 2015, has been renamed as “Talanoa Dialogue”. Yet, the objective remains to take stock of the collective efforts of parties in relation to progress towards the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement and to inform accordingly the preparation of upcoming NDCs by countries. It has been decided to start the dialogue in January 2018 by a preparatory phase that will provide a strong evidence-based foundation to a political phase that will start with the opening of COP 24.

The ETUC welcomes the design of the “Talanoa Dialogue” and in particular the fact that Ministers will be directly invited to react to the assessment, hopefully made on the basis of the best available science, of the collective effort of countries. The ETUC calls on countries to use that opportunity to bring their climate policies more into line with what the scientists are saying, through concrete commitment to raise the ambition of national climate policies. The ETUC also welcomes the opportunity for non-state stakeholders to feed the process with relevant inputs and will work with its affiliates – in cooperation with the ITUC and the Just Transition Center – to inform the dialogue about the challenges and opportunities that decarbonisation entails for the world of work.

## **Just transition action**

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Through the Paris Agreement, countries also committed to promote decent work and just transition for the workforce. These principles should not be forgotten now that we are entering the operationalisation of the Agreement. In that perspective, the ETUC sees the choice of Katowice as the host city of the next COP 24 as an opportunity to strengthen the just transition principles at the core of the international climate regime. Katowice is in a region with a strong industrial background that epitomises the challenges and opportunities of the transition towards a low-carbon economy and COP 24 must be the “Just Transition COP”.

With that objective, the ETUC calls for a high-level ministerial meeting at COP 24 between environment and labour ministers to launch a “Katowice Declaration for a Just Transition”, through which governments would clearly restate their commitment to base their climate policies on just transition and decent work principles. In addition, that meeting should launch a “Katowice plan of action for Just Transition” to be adopted under the COP for:

- gathering experiences from Parties in supporting communities and workers in transition;
- providing guidance to Parties on how to promote just transition and decent work as well as on how to create and maintain quality employment;
- mainstreaming just transition and decent work in the different dimensions of climate policies (mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, capacity building);
- giving a mandate to the Green Climate Fund and other entities dealing with climate finance to support projects aiming at creating sustainable quality jobs in regions potentially affected by transition to zero-carbon economy;
- ensuring that climate action is in line with SDGs and in particular 1, 5, 7 and 10.

The ETUC stresses that fighting climate change cannot be left to markets alone. Public authorities must steer the just transition towards a low-carbon economy through policy planning, ambitious policy framework, strong public sector and massive public investment. The ETUC reiterates its commitment to work with its affiliates, and in close cooperation with the ITUC, as well as through broader alliances, to promote an international climate regime that will ensure a decent and prosperous future to all.