



Climate Vulnerable Forum
Foro de Vulnerabilidad Climática
Forum de la Vulnérabilité Climatique

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PRESS RELEASE

Holy See Joins Final Push in Paris for 1.5°C

Le Bourget, Paris – 10 December 2015: The Holy See joined today the call to include the below 1.5°C global warming goal in the final drive for a legally-binding climate change deal here.

Consensus has clearly emerged on the importance of a final accord with the below 1.5°C temperature target, a key priority for the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), as the campaign continues to gain ground among countries participating in 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21).

The Vatican's support to the CVF initiative came after a bilateral meeting with senior officials of the Philippine delegation in COP21. The Philippines leads the CVF, a cooperation body representing vulnerable countries.

A total of 113 countries now endorse the inclusion of the below 1.5°C global warming target in the final Paris climate agreement.

"Free the text. Take down the brackets. We support option two [in article 2 of the Paris agreement]," said Monsignor Bernardito Auza, Apostolic Nuncio to the United Nations, referring to the section of the current negotiating text that calls to "rapidly scale up global efforts to limit temperature increase to below 1.5 °C."

In the current draft text, this phrase is in parentheses, which means it can either be modified or totally removed.

Monsignor Auza and colleagues, Paolo Conversi, the Secretariat of State, and Tebaldo Vinciguerra, of the Pontifical Council Justice and Peace, engaged in an active exchange with Secretary Nereus O. Acosta, of the Office of the President of the Philippines, and Commissioner Heherson Alvarez, of the Philippine Climate Change Commission, addressing key points in the Paris agreement and the tenets of Laudato Si, the Pope's encyclical on climate and the environment.

"We welcome the support of the Holy See behind the overwhelming majority of parties to the UNFCCC who want to see the below 1.5 °C limit enshrined in the Paris accord," Acosta said.



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"We hope the Vatican's position can give strength to the remaining countries hesitating to support real climate ambition. In these last hours, we are calling on all countries to stand in solidarity with billions of people alive and unborn, and to support the below 1.5°C global warming goal."

"We have a moral duty to keep warming to a minimum, and it is still feasible to limit warming to 1.5°C," he added.

Meeting with members of the "CVF Troika", the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization said, "1.5C is a very challenging target but it remains technically feasible."

CVF Troika member and future chair, Kare Debassa, State Minister for environment and climate change commented: "The African Common Position is 1.5°C. Our voice is growing stronger as we link through the Forum and beyond to the now 113 countries calling for 1.5°C including more and more each day of this conference. We are part of an unstoppable force for ambition."

The Minister of Environment and Energy of CVF Troika member Costa Rica, Edgar Gutiérrez said: "We're thrilled to see a number of the major economies, like Germany, France and Canada also supporting our calls for 1.5°C. The call for ambition has become infectious and we know that the world's civil society stands squarely with us. If you are for a successful outcome in Paris, you are with us on 1.5°C."

Bangladesh's environment under secretary, Dr. Nurul Quadir said: "The world knows exactly that our countries already suffer huge losses of life, property, income and much much more at the minimal warming experienced to date. Going to 2°C would be unthinkable."

"Even under a 1.5°C regime, we require an urgent rectification of the imbalance in climate finance to make resources available for adaptation as a humanitarian priority," Quadir further said. "The loss and damage mechanism under the agreement must also serve, above all, to assist those populations already experiencing set-backs to their lives and properties."

The groundswell of state support for the recognition of the below 1.5°C global warming goal in the final Paris climate deal was echoed by large-scale rallies by civil society, championing the move inside the COP21. Thousands of delegates had their picture taken performing the #1o5C campaign hand signal in support of 1.5°C promoted together with NGOs CARE International and the Climate Action Network.

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CONTACTS FOR CORRESPONDENTS

CVF/UNDP

Ms. Brittany Carmon
+33 (0) 7 88 60 41 57
brittany.carmon@undp.org
press@thecvf.org

Ms. Sarah Bel
sarah.bel@undp.org
+41 (0) 22 917 85 44

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