

Opening remarks by Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete at the Second Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA) by the EU, China and Canada

Excellencies, colleagues, let me start by welcoming you all to Brussels and thanking Minister McKenna and Special Representative Xie for co-organising this meeting today. And sincere thanks to all of you, ministers and high-level representatives, for having accepted our invitation.

The EU, Canada and China have joined forces to encourage global leadership and ambition in the fight against climate change by building momentum for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Following the successful first MOCA in Montreal last year, we have convened this opportunity for ministerial guidance on the successful conclusion of the Paris Agreement Work Programme and on the other key political events at COP 24.

At a time where multilateralism is being challenged, this meeting is a living proof of our commitment to implementing the Paris Agreement and determination to find solutions and compromises, all of us, multilaterally. We will need Ministerial leadership to achieve comprehensive, balanced, effective results that are consistent with the spirit of Paris. The EU, China and Canada are determined to continue work with all Parties to this end.

The MOCA brings together Ministers and high-level representatives from the world's largest economies and other countries from the different regional groups. In this more intimate and informal setting we hope to support – but not to replace or prejudge– the formal negotiations. As we have just heard in Berlin, achieving results at COP 24 will require us all to pick up the pace of negotiations, and to be well-prepared to send strong messages of political leadership. The agenda we have prepared reflects a subset of the key challenges that still need to be resolved.

The Petersberg Climate Dialogue hosted by Germany and Poland earlier this week provided for excellent high level exchanges. We see the next two days as an opportunity for deeper and more detailed peer-to-peer conversations on the political differences that we will need to resolve if we are to ensure a successful conclusion to COP 24.

We will kick off the meeting with general reflections on the outcome for COP 24 and its main deliverables, and tomorrow we will address key matters of the Paris Agreement Work Programme as it relates to action and as it relates to support. With six months between now and the closing plenary in Katowice, we must seize the opportunity of this MOCA to discuss – openly and sincerely – our individual asks and limitations.

At COP24 we must agree on guidance for the implementation of the Paris Agreement that unites Parties and does not divide them. This means a “rulebook” that is comprehensive, balanced, and carefully tailored to address each aspect of the Paris Agreement: cutting emissions, adapting to impacts and supporting implementation. The guidance agreed at COP 24 should be robust enough to deliver confidence that we are on track to implementing Paris, flexible enough to reflect relevant differences in Parties’ capacities, and dynamic enough to ensure that all Parties are improving their performance over time.

In addition, through the Talanoa Dialogue, the High Level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance, and the stocktake on pre-2020 action, Parties should be prepared to share our achievements and the lessons we have learned so far, and on how we can advance action and raise ambition from now into the future.

These processes will set the scene for the next round of NDCs and Long term strategies.

I look forward, in the plenary discussion to come, to sharing with you the details of how the EU is preparing for Katowice. This will include an update on the agreement of EU climate policies necessary for us to achieve our NDC, preparations for a new long term strategy to put us on track towards the Paris goals, and an EU Talanoa Dialogue, launched last week with the involvement of 600 stakeholders from across the EU and around the world.

Last Thursday, EU negotiators agreed to increase the 2030 renewable energy target to 32% up from the original 27% target on the basis of which our at least 40% emissions reduction target in our NDC was modelled. And yesterday evening, EU negotiators agreed on a new 32,5% energy efficiency target by 2030 up from the 30% original target. EU negotiators also agreed the governance rules to meet our climate and energy targets. Both new targets would de facto mean that the European Union would be in a position to raise the level of ambition of the NDC and increase its emissions reduction target from the current 40% to slightly over 45% by 2030.

Each of these recent developments in the EU shows that in addition to raising headline targets, ambition can emerge from the bottom-up: if we strengthen our policies, renewables and energy efficiency in this case, we should be able to achieve deeper cuts in our overall emissions.

One thing is clear: our collective Paris goal to pursue efforts to limit global average temperature rise to 2C and to limit this rise to well below 1.5C, requires each of us to look for deeper cuts than are reflected in our current Paris targets.

You can count on the EU to defend and implement the Paris Goals. But we clearly cannot do it alone: the EU accounts for less than 10% of global emissions today. To succeed, we need all countries, regions and actors around the world on board.

The MOCA is one way to contribute to getting everyone on board, so we look

forward to our discussions.

I now turn to my good friends and colleagues Minister McKenna and Special Representative Xie to share their expectations for this MOCA.