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Roundtable on Climate Change
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SPEAKING POINTS

- Estimados colegas y amigos, profesores y estudiantes, buenas tardes!

- Es un placer para mí participar en esta mesa redonda.

- El tema de hoy es de gran impacto y preocupación internacional: el cambio climático.

- Permítanme que continúe en inglés.

(1) *What is climate change? Why is it a challenge?*

- **Climate change is happening now!**

- The Earth is becoming rapidly warmer. In fact, the 20th century was the warmest century and the 1990s were the warmest decade in the past 1,000 years.

- The vast majority of the world's leading climate experts, attribute this warming mainly to an increase of 'greenhouse' gases (GHG), emitted by human activities, and the destruction of forests.
- This man-made warming is causing dramatic climatic and environmental changes. There are more frequent extremes of weather, rising sea levels, and melting glaciers and polar ice.
- And also dramatic impacts in human beings, for example climate refugees.
- There is considerable scientific evidence that the risk of these dramatic environmental changes, will greatly increase, if global warming reaches 2° C or more above the (pre-industrial temperature).
- This could stop, if the international community acts to cut Greenhouse emissions.

(2) The international response to the challenge

- **THE ONLY RESPONSE TO IT, CAN ONLY BE TO ACT**
- Acting is both technologically feasible and economically affordable. Its cost is estimated at around 1% of global GDP.

- In case that we *do not act*, the cost even will be higher. It could take at least 5% of global GDP and could reach 20% or more in the long term.
- **This is a global problem that requires global solutions.**
- And for that reason, we believe that UN is the best forum where to discuss this.
- As you know, the Kyoto Protocol will end in 2012.
- Based on the lessons learned, we need to build a comprehensive and inclusive post-Kyoto international agreement.
- **And this is what the Copenhagen Summit aimed for.**
- The Copenhagen Summit made important progress, as it resulted in the Copenhagen Accord.
- Nevertheless, many of us also expected more.
- For the EU, the Copenhagen Accord contains a number of **positive elements**:
 - It anchors the EU's objective of limiting global warming to below 2°C (above pre-industrial levels);
 - It requests developed countries to put forward their emission reduction targets,

- and invites developing countries to put forward their actions - which many have done;
 - It also provides the basis for regular monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of those actions;
 - It contains a commitment to significant financing for climate action by developing countries;
 - It gives guidance on tackling issues, like reducing emissions from deforestation, technology and adaptation.
- However, the Accord falls well short of the EU's ambition to reach a **comprehensive climate change international agreement. Indeed, it has major weaknesses and gaps**, for example:
 - It does not set global emission reduction targets;
 - It is not legally binding;
 - It was not formally adopted as a UN decision, but only "taken note" of.
 - Nevertheless, the more than 100 submissions of national mitigation actions made to date - by developed and developing countries - show **there is broad and still growing support for the Accord**.
 - **And the EU is ready to do its part!**

(3) The EU's response to the challenge

- At the domestic level, the EU adopted an **integrated Energy and Climate Change policy** in December 2008 - **20-20-20 for 2020!**

- cutting greenhouse gases by 20% (30% if international agreement other countries make comparable efforts)
 - reducing energy consumption by 20% through increased energy efficiency
 - increasing renewable energies to 20%
- In other words, we want in Europe a low-carbon and energy-efficient economy.
 - The **EU Emission Trading Scheme (ETS)** is our cornerstone in the fight against climate change. It is a complex issue, but to put it simply:
 - If you pollute less than the allowed amount, you can sell the difference and make profits.
 - It is an obligatory system in which the 11.500 European companies exchange emission permits.
 - This system covers close to half of Europe's total emissions of CO₂.
 - At the **international level**, the EU is ready to increase its reduction to 30% provided there is an equal effort from others.
 - We are now studying other partners' contributions to scale up our commitment to 30% reduction.
 - So, **WE WILL KEEP LEADING THE PROCESS BY THE EXAMPLE.**

- In this regard, we believe that finance is a key element in the climate change discussions.
- Europe has pledged financial assistance of **€7.2 billion** over the period 2010-12 (€ 2.4 billion a year) to first help developing countries strength their capacities to tackle climate change.
- And we are also studying contributions for after 2012.
- As you know, world climate leaders have met in Bonn over the last two weeks.
- And there the EU has presented its figures: EU pledges confirmed by MS to date amount to €2.18 billion in 2010. That represents over 90% of the overall annual pledge. **So, WE DELIVER!**
- And out of this money, we have just launched a project in Mexico on monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of emissions which will lead to increased cooperation.

(4) Mexico and the EU: natural allies

- The EU and Mexico are **natural allies** in the fight against climate change.
- And we have clearly stated so in the Strategic Partnership (SP) and its Joint Action Plan, adopted at the recent EU-Mexico Summit.

- The *SP* will allow us to further coordinate our positions in the international arena. It will **contribute to progress in the multilateral negotiations**.
- Mexico and the EU are both willing to act now and achieve substantial and concrete results in the international climate change negotiations.
- In 2008, Mexico made history by becoming **the first developing country to establish a national long-term emissions goal**
- And the **EU supports Mexico's efforts to achieve this mitigation objective**. We have currently 24 environmental and energy projects under different cooperation schemes, with a total EC contribution of about € 75 million.

(5) Perspectives for Cancun

- We now need **CLIMATE ACTION**. I cannot underline the last word enough: action is our objective.
- Action is also what I see as the central theme for the outcomes of the next Summit in Cancun.
- I am confident that in Cancun, we will be able to fill the gaps left in the Copenhagen Accord.

- And this will pave the way towards a more comprehensive global deal later on, preferably a legally binding treaty to be adopted in South Africa at the end of 2011.
- Recently, the EC set out its vision for the road to Cancun in a new policy paper called "*International climate policy post-Copenhagen: Acting now to reinvigorate global action on climate change*".
- Core messages from the policy paper:
 - It's important that we move forward. We cannot ignore the progress that was made in Copenhagen.
 - **We must move now to substance.** We will discuss the form in a later stage.
 - **The Cancun outcome must be inclusive, comprehensive and concrete.**
 - **To get there, we have now to advance in key issues such as technology transfer, financing and deforestation!!**
- **While we have to manage expectations, we must ensure ambition!!**

- **All in all, we must come prepared to reach a deal**: we need a deal and we need the political will to seal it.
- As the last 2 weeks in Bonn have shown, we still have much work ahead of us, it will again be a challenging year
- And let me finally underline an important element: **change brings big economic opportunities**.
- We firmly believe that a low-carbon and energy-efficient economy, is the only and right direction, even during the economic crisis.
- Indeed, the European experience shows that green business makes our economy more sustainable and competitive and creates new jobs.

(6) Conclusion

- The last two weeks in Bonn showed that we need to move forward, and to that end, we need **compromise, ambition and action**.
- A substantial climate change international agreement is feasible, as long as **everyone** wants it.
- **Thanks for your attention!**
