The EU Green Deal - A global perspective

I am excited that we agreed yesterday on an important milestone in the EU’s fight against climate change: we adopted the European Commission communication on the "EU Green Deal".

Climate change is one of the biggest geopolitical challenges we face. It poses problems of redistribution, inside the EU and beyond, and is a driver of instability and migratory pressures. It creates global problems of social justice, raises tensions and risks of conflict and poses a threat to human rights. Tackling these multifaceted threats must be at the centre of our foreign policy.

Last week I attended the opening of COP 25 in Madrid, which was my first activity in my role as EU High Representative. As I stated there, the EU is taking responsibility: the Green Deal puts forward a raft of transformative measures to tackle climate change. Its ambition is unprecedented.
But to have a global impact, we need collective action. The EU only accounts for 9% of global emissions, and that figure is falling, meanwhile the non-EU G20 countries account for over 70% of emissions, and for most the number is rising. I want to make climate action a key priority in our cooperation with partner countries. We have to work with everybody - from the biggest emitters in Asia, who need to set a high level of ambition for themselves and deliver on it, to the potential big emitters in Africa, who we will support in their efforts to ensure a sustainable economic transition. We have to work at every level, with multilateral partners like the United Nations, and with local communities and civil society.

During my mandate, I will do everything at my disposal to reinforce our impact and generate truly global cooperation on climate action. Strengthening climate diplomacy means working in partnership. It is not easy for any country, but in the EU we have much experience to share – from emissions trading to helping regions adjust as they move away from coal; and we have the means to help, as the world's biggest climate finance donor, providing along with our Member States over 40% of the world's public climate finance.

Therefore, as we embark on this new phase of ‘Green Deal diplomacy', our EU Delegations will step up engagement with their host countries to advocate for the EU's vision of the transition towards a sustainable future. We will use all the means at our disposal – from trade policy and technical assistance, to capacity building and development cooperation, as well as our crisis management tools when needed. This is the spirit of our geopolitical Commission. If we deliver a Green Deal for Europe, making the EU the leading example for a just and sustainable transition, we will have the credibility to press and help others to do the same. Then we can really make a difference to the future of our planet.

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