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Open letter to the Heads of State and Government of Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and United Kingdom

Dear Heads of State and Government,

As European National Directors of CARE International, one of the world's leading humanitarian and development organisations, **we are writing to urge you to make significant progress for an ambitious 2030 climate and energy framework** at your Council meeting on 20-21 March. In particular, we believe Europe can and must achieve domestic emissions reductions *of at least 55% by 2030* while also increasing support to help developing countries to address climate change. Currently, we are concerned that Europe will fail to show the ambition that is so urgently needed.

Climate change is a massive global injustice. As a leading humanitarian and development organisation fighting global poverty and providing lifesaving assistance in emergencies, CARE urges you to tackle climate change with utmost urgency. In our work supporting the poorest communities and people, in particular women and girls, we observe that development gains are being eroded, poverty reduction efforts are being reversed and the fulfilment of human rights is being undermined in many countries due to climate change. Over the past few years, the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including the recent Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, has demonstrated the gravity of climate change impacts resulting in the loss of many human lives. Even though they have done the least to produce the greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change, poor and vulnerable people are bearing the brunt of its impacts. The future of the world's poorest people looks increasingly bleak as average global temperatures rise and responsible governments fail to act adequately. In keeping with the demands of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Development States (SIDS), CARE believes average global temperature rises need to be limited to as close to 1.5°C as possible.

We are convinced that 2014 and 2015 provide an exceptional window of opportunity for renewed public attention and strong political commitment. Now is the moment to accelerate a crucial shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways globally. This is the only way to close the gap between the insufficient level of ambition likely to put the world on a pathway to 4°C or more, and the action that is required to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

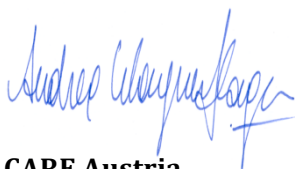
Given European achievements so far, and considering recent climate science, a 40% reduction target for 2030 is not sufficient. It implies an unacceptable 50/50 (or higher) likelihood of exceeding 2°C, which would risk triggering runaway climate change and lead to devastating impacts around the world that will put people's lives at risk, especially in vulnerable countries. Europe can and must achieve *domestic emissions reductions of at least 55% by 2030*. In addition, Europe needs to provide substantial support to developing countries for additional reductions to be consistent with fair and shared international effort. The 2030 framework should include *fully binding and ambitious targets for renewable energy (at least 45%) and energy savings (at least 40% compared to 2005)* which would better enable the necessary long-term transformation of the European economy towards phasing out greenhouse gas emissions. Ambition for 2030 is crucial but action must be taken before 2020 to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Thus, we urge you to advocate for a *scaling up of the EU 2020 reduction target to at least 30%*.

We also strongly encourage you to **attend the UN climate summit in September** in New York and use this opportunity to generate public mobilisation on climate change, including in your respective countries. We also invite you to actively respond to UN Secretary General Ban-Ki moon's call to bring "bold pledges [to the summit] that will contribute to closing the emissions gap and put us on track for an ambitious legal agreement through the UNFCCC process." This would help build a momentum towards the negotiations on a future climate agreement and the UNFCCC COP20 in Peru. Significant financial pledges for the initial replenishment for a Green Climate Fund, which provides support for poor and vulnerable communities, would send a strong signal of action. In addition a roadmap and intermediary targets are needed to provide clarity on how governments will scale-up public climate finance for vulnerable developing countries.

While discussions on the **post-2015 development framework** have started, the 2014 UN General Assembly will further set the direction for this historic milestone. We ask you to support the call for a single post-2015 sustainable development agenda. This should include specific goals to end extreme poverty and to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. Furthermore, it should include a strong and visible commitment to scale-up climate action in the coming years for strengthening climate resilience and for keeping the world *well below* 2°C of warming.

Climate change is the most fundamental challenge of our time. Europe's emissions may be a diminishing part of the world's contribution to global warming but contrary to the allegations from some parts, its leadership in developing policies and setting a benchmark remains critical. We therefore ask you to step up and create a new dynamic at the European and international level in the lead up to the Paris Climate Summit in 2015. The risks and costs of inaction, for the world's poorest and for us all, are far too great to ignore. This is literally a matter of life and death on an unprecedented scale. Failure to act is not an option.

Yours sincerely,



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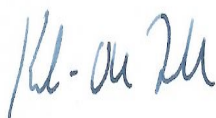


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