



**Video speech given by *Minister Jacqueline Cramer,***  
*Netherland (Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment)*

Ladies and gentlemen,

My sincere apologies for not being present at this very important conference organised by the Eisenhower Fellows of Europe. I would have liked to give you my views on tackling the climate problem in person. I still have fond memories of my three-month stay in the United States as an Eisenhower Fellow in 1992. It is a great privilege to belong to the same distinguished group as yourselves. I hope to meet you in person next time. On this occasion I would like to share some of my thoughts with you on video.

Meeting in L'Aquila, Italy, this past summer, leaders of the Major Economies Forum (MEF) member states recognized that the increase in global average temperature should not exceed pre-industrial levels by more than two degrees Celsius.

This is the kind of political guidance we need if we are to turn the tide in the fight against climate change.

These nations are responsible for more than 75 per cent of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. They have widely divergent interests. If they can agree on such a politically charged question as the threshold of dangerous climate change, surely the rest of the world cannot be far behind.

It is now up to all of us to do what is necessary to prevent the world from crossing the two-degree threshold. Together we have it in our power to move the world onto a path of sustainable, low-carbon economic growth.

Obviously what happens this December in Copenhagen is crucial. But what you are doing today in Paris is just as important. The science is clear about what needs to be done:

- one, worldwide emissions need to peak by 2020 and be reduced by at least half in 2050 relative to 1990;
- two, developed countries need to lead the way by providing more certainty and showing more ambition regarding their emission reductions;

- three, developing countries need to be clear about how they will enhance their efforts to decouple emission growth from economic growth and about what kind of financial and technological help they need to accomplish this;
- and finally, all countries need to agree on how to raise, disburse and account for new, additional and predictable funding for climate action.

These are all complicated issues. There is no denying that the political challenges are immense and are compounded by conflicting interests both within and between countries. But we are able and willing, and since we are responsible for the mess, we are also responsible for cleaning it up.

Taking vigorous action now is the least expensive strategy and the one with the least amount of risk.

We need not wait for an outcome in Copenhagen to start moving towards sustainable, low-carbon economies. It starts today. In Paris and elsewhere around the world.

The economic crisis has opened our eyes to opportunities for creating jobs and developing new kinds of businesses while simultaneously tackling the climate crisis, enhancing energy security and encouraging innovation. Many countries, including my own, have embraced these opportunities by including measures that promote investments in clean energy and energy savings in their stimulus packages.

The Dutch stimulus package is an addition to our programme 'New Energy for Climate Policy' – which we launched in 2007. Our goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent relative to 1990 and increase the share of renewable energy to 20 per cent by 2020, while improving energy efficiency by 2 per cent per year.

We drew up these plans because they are good for our planet. But we are also convinced of the positive effect they will have on our economy. A low carbon economy is a successful economy!

Elaborating on how this link might work is one of the challenges we need to meet between now and December. The carbon market will be an important part of the link. Our experience with the flexible Kyoto mechanisms is helpful as we contribute to the discussions on this issue.

The Netherlands firmly believes that developed countries must lead the fight against climate change. But the problem can only be solved if developing countries step up to the plate too.

With help from the international community they can reduce the carbon intensity of their economic growth.

At the climate summit in Copenhagen agreements will be made on funding. The investments required are unheard-of. They must be distributed fairly among the rich nations and developing nations. An effective CO2 trading system will play a major role in this regard.

Alongside the government of Mexico we are working on nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs). These are based on Mexico's recently published Programa Especial de Cambio Climático. We hope this cooperation will provide insight into how NAMAs might work and give us a clearer picture of the tools and processes that will need to be developed after Copenhagen.

Yesterday and today you have met to discuss this and many other issues concerning energy, security and climate change. A meeting of minds, as it were.

It strengthens and inspires me to know that a younger generation than my own has also stood up and is engaged with the future well-being of planet earth. It's the only home we have.

In order to sustain life we need to change our habits, kick our oil addiction and reduce our environmental footprint. We face many challenges, but I am convinced we can overcome them if – and only if – we stand united in our cause.

I wish you wisdom, new insights and inspiration. Thank you.