

Resolution on the climate change conference in Cancun (COP16)

2010/2764(RSP) - 25/11/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 292 votes in favour, 274 against and 38 abstentions a resolution on the climate change conference in Cancun (COP16).

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/ALE, ECR and GUE/NGL groups.

It calls on the EU to declare openly prior to Cancun that it is **ready to continue with the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (2013-2020)** on the basis of its corresponding target, while recognising that comparable progress under both tracks is required to clear the way for an international post-2012 agreement that would meet the 2°C objective. It deplores the fact that there has not been more progress to date in preparing for Cancun, stating that substantive steps need to be agreed in Cancun to pave the way for the conclusion of a comprehensive international post-2012 agreement in South Africa in 2011, which should be in line with the latest developments in science and consistent with the 2°C objective. Parliament strongly urges the Commission and Member States to resolve their differences over land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) and surplus emission rights (AAUs), to speak with one voice in the COP16 negotiations and to improve their internal decision-making procedure so as to be able to react more quickly to developments during the negotiations, and to be more responsive to third countries. It stresses the importance of providing information on the state of play of negotiations, especially during the final hours of the high-level segment of COP16. The EU must give its chief negotiator some flexibility to react to developments.

Reduction commitments: the 2°C objective requires that global greenhouse gas emissions peak by 2015 at the latest and are reduced by at least 50% as compared with 1990 by 2050 and continue to decline thereafter. Parliament urges all international partners, including the USA and China, to come up with more ambitious commitments for emissions reductions based on the principle of a ‘common but differentiated responsibility’, in order to ensure consistency with the 2°C objective. It reiterates the need to adopt a domestic greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for the EU of 30% by 2020 as compared with the 1990 level, in the interests of the future economic growth of the EU. Members support the Commission’s idea that, irrespective of the outcome of international negotiations, it is in the EU’s interest to pursue an emissions reduction goal of more than 20% because it will promote green jobs, growth and security at the same time. Owing to the drop in emissions as a result of the recession, the annual cost of achieving a 20% reduction by 2020 has fallen by one-third from EUR 70 billion to EUR 48 billion, and the cost of a 30% reduction is now estimated at EUR 11 billion more than the original 20% reduction, i.e. an additional cost of less than 0.1% of the value of the EU economy.

Members recognise that reaching the 2°C objective will only be possible if the developing countries as a group achieve a substantial and quantifiable deviation below the current predicted emissions growth rate of the order of 15 to 30% below business-as-usual by 2020. Developing nations will be the worst affected by the consequences of climate change, so that it is in their vital interest to contribute to the successful conclusion of an international agreement.

Financing: Parliament recalls that the collective contribution by the EU towards developing countries’ mitigation efforts and adaptation needs should be additional and not be less than EUR 30 000 million per annum by 2020, a figure that might increase as new knowledge is acquired concerning the severity of climate change. It considers the timely implementation of the fast-start financing to be a key factor in building an atmosphere of trust before and in Cancun. Members stress the need for the EUR 7.2 billion, as

pledged by EU and its Member States, to be new and additional to Official Development Assistance (ODA) budgets, with a balanced allocation between adaptation and mitigation. Monitoring, reporting and verification of finance must include a fair, common baseline against which contributions can be counted as new and additional. Parliament recommends that the baseline should be the longstanding commitment to provide 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) as ODA, or other corresponding national targets where these are higher. It calls on the Commission and the Member States to honour their commitments and guarantee that resources for adaptation and mitigation come on top of the 0.7% ODA target and specify how much of the commitment will come from public funding. Lastly, Parliament encourages the EU to facilitate the establishment of a Green Climate Fund supplying USD100 billion per year from 2020.

Members stress the **historical responsibility borne by the developed countries** for irreversible climate change and call for an agreement in Cancun which incorporates strong political and financial commitments to assist developing countries in capacity-building, and a strengthening of the EU's existing climate partnerships with developing countries, providing increased financial support for technology development and transfer, agreements on intellectual property rights and institutional capacity-building.

REDD: Parliament emphasises that natural greenhouse gas sinks, such as forests, are efficient means of climate change mitigation, owing to their CO₂ absorption capacity, and it urges the Parties to develop a forestation policy to be integrated into an international climate change agreement. The EU is asked to work towards concrete decisions on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) in Cancun, including specific targets. Members call on the EU actively to support the REDD+ mechanism. However, Parliament deplors that REDD funding is based on such a broad definition of forests, which includes monoculture plantations of non-native species, feeling that this definition may provide a perverse incentive to divert funding from the much-needed protection of old and ancient forests to new, commercial plantations. It calls for a new UN definition of forests on a biome basis.

Sustainable economy and technology: Parliament considers that regardless of the progress in the international negotiations the EU should urgently adopt the policies and instruments necessary to promote development of a more sustainable, low-carbon and resource-efficient economy, thereby mitigating climate change, improving air and environmental quality, promoting energy security, creating new jobs and ensuring that the EU becomes the most competitive economy in a world where investments are being directed towards cleaner technologies. It stresses that the **development and deployment of breakthrough technologies** hold the key to fighting climate change and asks the Commission to assess various ways of providing incentives for climate-friendly innovation, e.g. by rewarding frontrunner businesses.

Energy efficiency: Parliament calls on the EU to place more emphasis on energy savings in international negotiations; in that connection, notes and deeply deplors the fact that the **EU is not on track to meet the 20% energy-saving target** set by the Heads of State and Government by 2020, owing to the non-binding approach taken. It calls on the EU to lead by example and on the Commission to propose new measures to ensure that the target is met.

Lastly, Parliament states that it finds it unacceptable that the members of the European Parliament contingent in the delegation were unable to attend the EU coordination meetings at the previous COP, and that it expects at least the chairs of the European Parliament delegation to be allowed to attend EU coordination meetings in Cancun.