United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): Paris Agreement

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PURPOSE: to conclude on behalf of the European Union of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: at the 21st Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (known as **COP 21**), which took place in Paris from 30 November to 12 December 2015, **the text of an agreement was adopted, concerning the strengthening of the global response to climate change**.

In its communication assessing the implications of the Paris Agreement, the Commission stated that the Paris Agreement should be **signed and ratified as soon as possible**. In its conclusions of 18 March 2016, the European Council underlined the need for the European Union and its Member States to conclude the Paris Agreement as soon as possible and on time so as to be parties as of its entry into force.

As a first step, the **Agreement was signed by the Commission and Council** on behalf of the European Union and by all 28 Member States on their behalf at the high-level signature ceremony which took place in New York on 22 April 2016.

The Paris Agreement is in **conformity with the environmental objectives of the Union** as referred to in Article 191 of the Treaty, namely preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment; protecting human health; and promoting measures at international level to deal with regional or worldwide environmental problems, and in particular combating climate change.

The 2030 climate and energy policy framework for the EU sets an ambitious economy-wide target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions at least 40% domestically by 2030, as well as renewable energy and energy efficiency targets of at least 27%. Implementing the 2030 energy and climate framework is a priority in follow up to the Paris Agreement.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes that the Council decide to **approve**, on behalf of the European Union, **the Paris Agreement adopted on 12 December 2015** under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Paris Agreement is a global milestone for enhancing global collective action and accelerating the global transformation to a low-carbon and climate resilient society. It will **replace the approach taken under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol**, that contains commitments until the end of 2020. These commitments will not be continued beyond 2020.

The Paris Agreement sets out a qualitative long-term emissions reduction goal in line with the objective to **keep the global temperature increase well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to keep it to 1.5°C**. In order to achieve this goal, the parties will prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally

determined contributions. Starting from 2023, parties will every 5 years undertake a global stocktake, based on the latest science and implementation to date, which will track progress and consider emission reductions, adaptation and support provided.

The Agreement will enter into force on the 30th day after the date on which **at least 55 parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55% of global greenhouse gas emissions** have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.