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

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The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Giovanni LA VIA (EPP, IT) on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The committee recommended the European Parliament to give its consent to the conclusion of the Paris Agreement adopted at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21).

The Paris Agreement:

- sets out a long term goal to put the world on track to limit global warming to well **below 2°C** above pre-industrial levels – and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to **1.5°C**;
- sends a clear signal to all stakeholders, investors, businesses, civil society and policy-makers that the **global transition to clean energy** is here to stay and that resources have to shift away from fossil fuels;
- provides a **dynamic mechanism to take stock** and strengthen ambition over time. Starting from 2023, Parties will come together every five years in a "global stocktake" to consider progress in emissions reductions, adaptation and support provided and received in view of the long-term goals of the Agreement;
- obliges parties to pursue **domestic mitigation measures**;
- set up an **enhanced transparency and accountability framework**, including the biennial submission by all Parties of greenhouse gas inventories and the information necessary to track their progress, a technical expert review, a facilitative, multilateral consideration of Parties' progress and mechanism to facilitate implementation of and promote compliance;
- provides an **ambitious solidarity package** with adequate provisions on climate finance and on addressing needs linked to adaptation and loss and damage associated with adverse effects of climate change;
- encourages **greater cooperation** among Parties to share scientific knowledge on adaptation as well as information on practices and policies.

The Paris 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 55% of global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to the UN. As of 29 June 2016, 178 States had signed the Paris Agreement, and 19 States had deposited instruments for its ratification, accounting in total for 0.18 % of the total global greenhouse gas emissions.

In the short justification which accompanies the recommendation, it is stressed that the Paris Agreement is a **historically significant landmark** achievement for combating climate change and for multilateralism. It represents an **ambitious, balanced, equitable and legally binding agreement** which marks a decisive turning point towards comprehensive and collective global action, and, when implemented, will definitively and irreversibly accelerate the transition to a climate resilient, climate neutral global economy.

The rapporteur considered that the ratification decision on the conclusion of the Paris Agreement adopted under the UNFCCC will send a **strong signal** and highlight the **leadership of the EU and its Member States** and their continuing efforts to address climate change at international level.

It called on the Council to take all necessary steps to finalise its position on the Paris Agreement ratification, together with the parallel national ratification processes in the Member States, as soon as possible, so as to finalise the EU ratification process and deposit the instruments of ratification to the UN before the end of 2016.