

Remarks at the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) / Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) Council by Ambassador Dirk Wouters of Belgium.

Washington DC, December 19, 2019.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Thank you, Chair.

It is an honour to be here with you at this Council session today, as we gather to take stock of the efforts taken towards helping the world's most vulnerable countries addressing the climate challenge. It *are* the Least Developed Countries who face the biggest challenge, and for whom it is most difficult to adapt, and it is our common responsibility to support them in their efforts.

I came here to make 3 remarks.

First,

To state on behalf of my government that we value the role that the LDC-fund plays in the international climate finance architecture. LDCF has a rich experience to share. Together with recipient countries and implementing agencies the fund achieves progress in the most difficult and fragile contexts.

We are also pleased with the strengthened engagement by the Fund with the private sector and with its investments in innovation.

Second,

I want to state that Belgium will remain a loyal & predictable partner to the LDCF.

This is why BE is honored to pledge today a contribution of EUR 15 million to the LDC Fund. This contribution will be paid in 2019.

As you know, the LDC's are confronted to a very young and rapid growing population, with social and institutional instabilities, as well as severe security issues which have an additional impact to the Climate Change consequences they already face.

This contribution will hopefully allow the financing of new projects , **among others the ones that were technically cleared but not included in this Work Program of the LDCF due to a lack of resources.**

Of course Belgium has no idea where these remaining projects are likely to be implemented. But we know these projects are likely to benefit LDC's, and this is what really matters to us as we want to focus our financial ODA-resources to the poorest countries, which are often the most severely affected by CC.

We hope this contribution, which brings our total contribution to the Fund since 2009 to almost 135 million USD, will be instrumental in helping them with that.

This was my second remark.

My last remark is about a very important choice the EU made. A truly generational one.

Last week the EU engaged on its European Green Deal, a roadmap to embed climate action into all policies. We committed to climate neutrality by 2050. In this context we cannot support global rules which would undermine environmental integrity and take us back instead of taking us forward.

The Green Deal points towards a new direction that stimulates growth, tackles climate change and combats rising inequality.

COP 25 did not deliver what we expected. Despite all the energy and commitment of our negotiators, we did not reach an agreement on Article 6 and so we are disappointed. The EU showed flexibility and open-mindedness till the last minute, including showing solidarity with positions of the most vulnerable countries.

Next year must therefore be the year of increasing ambition. By COP26 in Glasgow we need to update our Nationally Determined Contributions and submit our Long-Term Strategies, in line with the Paris objectives. And in the European Union we are ready for this.

We cannot afford to leave anyone behind.

The EU and its Member States already provide more than 40% of the global climate finance, and will continue to scale it up in line with the Paris Agreement goals.

And in its own Climate Vision, the Belgian Development Cooperation will continue to focus specifically on the needs of least developed countries and on climate adaptation, both in its multilateral policy and in its bilateral policy, including non-governmental actions.

This concludes my third and final remark.

Thank you very much Madam chair.
