

Remarks by
Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, K. Massimov
At the Opening Plenary of the 21st Conference of Parties
To the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

Le Bourget, France

November 30, 2015

Mesdames, Messieurs.

Au nom de notre président Monsieur Nazarbayev et moi-même, j'aimerais exprimer notre plus profonde compassion et solidarité aux victimes du 13 novembre et au peuple français. Ces dernières semaines j'ai été très touché par la force de cette grande nation et je suis fier d'être ici aujourd'hui.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Esteemed Guests.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of France for hosting this historic Conference.

I come before you today with a simple yet critical message. Climate change is real, it is the major challenge of our time and we have a collective responsibility to address it..

Kazakhstan supports a new Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the climate system, within the framework a socially sustainable development path. We must reach an agreement during this conference. This agreement is a necessary foundation stone to facilitate the transition to low-carbon development and keep global warming within two degrees Celsius.

As the world's largest land-locked country, we face serious consequences from climate change including desertification, drought and agricultural degradation. We have seen the effects of man-made natural catastrophe in our country with the drying of the Aral Sea. We are now seeing the effects of Climate Change: precipitation is decreasing whilst flooding is increasing and the average temperature has increased by more than one-quarter of one degree over the last decade.

I am confident, however, that we will be able to coordinate our efforts here at COP Twenty-One, adopt a new binding agreement and avoid the point of no return for the climate.

For our part, we, in Kazakhstan are taking our share of the responsibility.

We have developed a series of systemic policies to meet our emissions challenge and accelerate low-carbon development.

These include adopting an emissions trading system for greenhouse gases, launching a comprehensive concept for transitioning to a green economy and making investments in low carbon technologies across key areas of our economy.

Reflecting the global nature of climate change and as a means to promote the interdependent priority of sustainable development, we launched the Green Bridge Program at the Rio Plus Twenty Conference in twenty-twelve.

We are also focused on the goal of developing sustainable sources of energy. That is why we have enacted a supportive framework for renewable energy and are investing heavily in energy efficiency initiatives. It is also why we are eagerly hosting International Expo Twenty-Seventeen in our capital city, Astana, under the theme of "Future Energy".

These policies are embedded in our current reform agenda and form the backbone of our national commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by fifteen percent by twenty-thirty.

Moreover, we are ready to take a step further. With the right support and investment in advanced technologies we are open to decreasing our emissions twenty-five percent by twenty-thirty.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

If human history has taught us anything, it's that what we can understand, we can fix. We understand that climate change is a grave threat to humankind and our way of life and we must rise to this challenge. Doing so, we have to take the lessons of nature as well as the lessons of modernity. We, in Kazakhstan, have built a modern nation on the basis of our ancient nomadic culture for which harmony with nature is a condition of prosperity and happiness. The fight against climate change is a cultural one. Therefore, I encourage us to find the common ground necessary to reach a new climate agreement and in the process show our collective commitment to sustainable development for all.

Thank you.