



Brussels, October 23 2009

To:

Mr Fredrik Reinfeldt, Prime Minister of Sweden, President of the European Council
Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission
Mr Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament
Mr Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for the Environment
Mr Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark, President of the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of our Roman Catholic and Protestant networks of development and humanitarian organisations in Europe, we wish to jointly address you in advance of the European Council on 29-30th October where EU Heads of State will take critical decisions on the European Union's position for the Copenhagen Climate Summit.

Copenhagen is crucial, and must produce an ambitious, equitable and binding international agreement. Two decades, marked by lack of political will and action on the part of the international political community, have passed since scientific evidence unequivocally demonstrated that climate change is taking place. Now recent evidence indicates that climate change is happening at an ever more rapid pace and with more severe impacts than originally anticipated. The economic downturn must not be used as an excuse for further delay. **Early and effective action now is the only way to reduce human, environmental and economic costs – both for present and future generations. These costs already threaten to significantly overshadow those of the current financial and economic crisis.**

As networks of faith-based development agencies we are faced every day with the impacts that climate change has on the communities we serve. The human rights and the dignity of many poor and vulnerable people in the world are eroded by the actions of industrialised countries. This injustice, in our view, urgently needs to be corrected.

The European Union includes countries which are among the major contributors to the origin of the current climate change, and have the greatest capacity to act. Therefore, the EU has a historical and a moral responsibility to support developing countries in coping with the additional challenges imposed on them by climate change, and to help them find alternative, sustainable ways to pursue their development.

The position that the European Council will take in October has the potential to make or break the negotiations in the few weeks left until the Copenhagen Summit. If proposals by developed countries on their mitigation targets and support to developing countries neither reflect their historical responsibility nor what is needed according to scientific evidence to effectively tackle the climate crisis, developing countries simply cannot be expected to commit to additional mitigation and adaptation actions on top of ongoing challenges to reduce poverty.

It is very disappointing and deeply worrying that, after months of deliberations and negotiations, the EU Finance Ministers failed to reach agreement on finance for climate action in developing countries. With only a week of negotiations left until Copenhagen, it would be a strategic mistake for the EU not to deal with this fundamental issue. The UN climate negotiations have been waiting for an EU position on financing for months. Further delay risks widening the trust gap between rich and poor countries and significantly undermining chances of agreement in Copenhagen.

The onus is now on the EU Heads of State at the forthcoming European Council meeting to seize the opportunity that the Finance Ministers missed: i.e. making a strong commitment to provide new, additional and predictable public funding for climate change action in developing countries. The EU must not seek to evade its responsibility by leaving developing countries to take on a large share of the costs of climate change themselves, and by infringing on already scarce ODA flows to pay for the additional costs imposed by climate change. Failure to commit new and additional funding will not only diminish chances to reach agreement in Copenhagen, it will also threaten development progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Essential elements of an effective and equitable EU negotiating position that must be adopted by the European Council on 29-30th October are;

- **Strong commitment to domestic reductions of at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2020;**
- **Support for a fair and equitable global effort sharing model which respects the right of poorer countries to sustainable development;**
- **Commitment to innovative climate finance mechanisms that can provide predictable, sustainable and adequate funding in addition to existing Official Development Assistance commitments;**
- **Commitment for the EU to provide at least €35 billion new and additional public funds annually for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries and to commit to a near-term financing package for pre-2012 action in developing countries.**

We hope and trust that you will use your influence to ensure that the European Council will provide much needed momentum on the road to Copenhagen, and leadership towards a more sustainable and equitable economic future for our world.

Sincerely,



Rob van Drimmelen

General Secretary, Aprodev



Marius Wanders

General Secretary, Caritas Europe



Bernd Nilles

General Secretary, CIDSE