

Minister for Environment and Climate Change

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*Dear Rob*

I attended the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) Conference of the Parties (COP19) in Warsaw from 17-20 November as part of the UK Delegation.

Scottish Ministers' aim is to promote higher ambition from the international community on tackling climate change and to champion climate justice, to support an ambitious and equitable global climate Agreement to be signed in Paris in 2015. While in Warsaw I promoted Scotland's actions on tackling climate change, including: the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 which had unanimous support from the Parliament; that we are over halfway to our world-leading 42% emissions cut target for 2020 and the fact that, while it is becoming increasingly challenging, Scotland remains committed to our targets; we now generate 39% of equivalent electricity demand from renewables; our strong evidence for the counter-cyclical boost from the low carbon economy providing jobs, trade, investment and growth: our comprehensive mitigation and adaptation programme; our participation in the UN Sustainable Energy for All initiative; and our International Climate Justice Conference held on 9 October. The messages from Scotland were well received by my Ministerial counterparts, NGOs and businesses, including attracting praise for Scotland's good example from Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Action.

I shared speaking platforms with: Connie Hedegaard; Lars Lokke Rasmussen, former Prime Minister of Denmark; Griffin Thomson, US lead Negotiator on Technology; and business figures; as well as engaging in discussion with Nancy Sutley, President Obama's White House Adviser on the Environment. I met Polish Minister Janusz Zaleski, to discuss the COP Presidency and Poland's climate policy, and had a very positive encounter with Finland's Minister of the Environment Ville Niinistö who was leading for the EU on REDD (deforestation) and LULUCF (land use) issues. I also met Bas Eickhout, an Environment Committee MEP. I also met Ministers from Malawi, Quebec, Alberta, and engaged in discussion with Ministers from Brittany, North Rhine Westphalia, Catalonia, KwaZulu-Natal, and Rhone-Alps. I met the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance; CIDSE (Network of Catholic Development Organisations); ITUC (International Trades Union Congress); CANEurope

(network of European NGOs); Friends of the Earth International; and the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute. I met Secretary of State Ed Davey following our discussion the previous week about the prospects for the conference. I attended the first EU Ministers co-ordination meeting plus the UNFCCC Opening High Level Plenary including opening statements from the EU and Mexico which also has climate legislation and messaging very similar to Scotland on the need for governments to provide certainty on the low carbon future.

COP 19 took place against the tragic background of the Philippines typhoon. The negotiations were challenging: NGOs walked out of the negotiations in protest at the lack of commitment from developed countries. Nonetheless, an albeit very tight timetable was agreed towards a new global climate Agreement to limit global warming to 2°C to be signed in Paris in December 2015:

- Additional analysis of pre-2020 mitigation pledges will be discussed by Ministers in June 2014;
- The UN Secretary-General will hold a World Leaders Climate Summit in New York on 23 September 2014;
- A draft negotiating text for the new Agreement will be ready for COP 20, in Lima, Peru, in December 2014;
- All major economies will propose their initial contributions to global climate mitigation efforts by the 1st quarter of 2015 so that they can be assessed prior to COP21 in Paris.

Warsaw also finalised agreement and funding to combat deforestation, established the "Warsaw Mechanism" to examine Loss and Damage (support to developing countries suffering the impacts of climate change), and progressed international climate finance including the Green Climate Fund.

We must continue to promote Scottish ambition on climate change as a model to other countries in the crucial period, including COP20 in Lima next year, leading up to the Paris summit in 2015 to play our part in making sure that global action is sufficient to limit global warming to 2°C, as the international community has agreed to do, and to avoid the very worst impacts of climate change. I look forward to continuing to promote the evidence from Scotland about the economic benefits of action on climate change, our participation in UN Sustainable Energy for All, and the need for climate justice, in the coming year, working with the UK Government, EU Ministerial colleagues, our broader contacts with governments internationally, The Climate Group, and Scottish and international NGOs.

*Kindest regards*



**PAUL WHEELHOUSE**