



Special Meeting of the Subcommittee on Sustainable Development on COP21 outcomes

Secretary General's Welcoming Remarks

**ACP House, Brussels
Tuesday, 22nd March 2016**

Excellencies, Ambassadors and Representatives of ACP Embassies and Missions,

Representatives of the European Commission,

Representatives of International Organisations,

Representatives of ACP Regional Organizations and Partners,

Distinguished participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

From the outset, let me welcome you to the ACP Secretariat and to this Special meeting of the Sub-committee on Sustainable Development to discuss the outcomes of the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21).

More importantly, the two-day meeting was convened to identify in a concrete manner the ways and means by which the Secretariat of the ACP Group can further assist its Member States to address the challenges associated with climate change and in order to prepare for the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Excellencies,

I want to personally express my gratitude to the delegations from the 79 ACP Member States that attended COP21 and negotiated tirelessly to ensure that an ambitious, legally binding and universal agreement was adopted in Paris. The agreement aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change; and the ACP Group of States is ready to support its implementation.

As you are aware, the adverse impacts of climate change poses significant risks to all ACP countries, and in particular the Small Island Developing States as evidenced by the recent devastation of the Fiji islands by cyclone Winston. It is for this reason, among others, that the ACP Forum on Small Island Developing States was established, to give additional prominence, focus and visibility to the unique challenges associated with SIDS.

Excellencies,

The ACP Group, in its diverse composition, includes 37 Small Island Developing States, 39 Least Development Countries and 15 Land-locked Developing Countries, all of which are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As you deliberate over the next two days on such critical issues as Adaptation, Mitigation, Loss and Damage, Finance, REDD plus, Technology Development and Transfer and capacity building. It is hoped that you will identify some possible areas of collaboration with the ACP Secretariat in order to address these issues in ACP Countries.

Excellencies,

Action to address climate change cannot be achieved without the necessary technical and financial resources. Under the 11th EDF Intra-ACP framework, 475 million Euros is earmarked to address climate change, resilience and environment. However, this is but a small contribution given the significant amount of financial support that is required by ACP countries and regions. As a result, mobilizing funding from a variety of sources, including public and private, bilateral and multilateral and innovative sources of finance, to support ACP Countries will be critical to the fight against climate change.

Along this line, the Secretariat is working towards mobilising resources beyond the ones directly earmarked in the 11th EDF for Climate change, resilience and environment to mainstream actions in preparing for implementation of the Paris agreement. Efforts are also being intensified to consolidate and build on regional cooperation and dialogues in this regard.

Given the limited financial resource, it is essential to prioritise actions and determine the most effective implementation modalities to ensure the greatest impact on the ground in ACP countries.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I strongly encourage your deliberations be innovative and constructive over the next two days and I look forward to the outcome of this special meeting, as the Secretariat is prepared to contribute to the implementation of the Paris Agreement and support its Member States in a more efficient and effective manner.

I thank you for your kind attention and welcome you once more to the ACP House.