



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère du Développement durable
et des Infrastructures

Département de l'environnement

Audience of European Environment Ministers with His Holiness Francis

Vatican, September 16th, 2015

Speech of H.E. Carole Dieschbourg,

Minister for the Environment of Luxembourg

(In the context of the Encyclical letter « Laudato Si » and in the view of COP21)

Holiness,

It is a great honor and a great pleasure for us, the Ministers of the Environment of the European Union and the Commissioners, to have the opportunity to meet you today.

2015 is a key year for Humanity and our planet.

This year is being marked with several determining events representing big challenges which are historical chances for sustainable development and the fight against global warming.

At the end of this month, the sustainable development goals will be hopefully adopted at United Nations' Special Summit for Sustainable Development in New York and at the Paris conference on climate change - known as COP 21 – a new global climate agreement will be adopted.

2015 could be the turning point where the international community takes the steps to redefine its economic model and its priorities.

The encyclical letter "Laudato Sì" - which calls for an "ecological conversion" of the world could not have been issued at a more crucial and decisive moment.

Your encyclical letter, Holy Father Francis, is a spiritual document, which has the merit to reach out much further than the Catholic Church. It has already challenged and inspired and stimulated conversations at religious, political and societal levels.

It has brought a new moral and emotional dimension to an often purely scientific, theoretical and political discussion.

It has indeed the capacity to mobilize and stimulate people all over the world.

- I would like to acclaim your clear language, your sound analysis and the true scientific value of your document.
- I agree with your statement on a flagrant interconnection; namely the fact that climate change is closely linked to our economic model which is not sustainable and which increases inequalities As most vulnerable countries are affected.
- Our current way of life leads us to an over-exploitation of our resources. You point out very clearly that Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyles, production and consumption. It is a matter of "redefining progress".
- We are here, Environment Ministers of across Europe, because we are aware of the necessity of a political leadership; we are ready to fight for an ambitious agreement in Paris.
- "Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home." We thus need a leadership which shall not be influenced by private interests but is ought to be guided by or common interest with a long-term

vision for the benefit of all. A common vision guided by love and respect. The love for our planet, for all its people and for generations to come.

Let me be clear: We will not solve the poverty crisis without solving the climate and environmental crisis in the respect of the planet that feeds us all.

The Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris agreement on climate change will be historic opportunities which shall not be missed.

We will, however, not save the planet at New York or at COP 21. The challenge will be to put in place an international framework that will enable us to prevent an increase of the average temperature of the planet above a maximum of 2 degrees Celsius, a framework to accelerate the transition into a fairer, climate resilient and resource-efficient world.

I sincerely hope that the Paris conference will be a success. EU will be an ambitious player. I also hope that following Paris, we can still count on the active support of the Catholic Church in the implementation of the agreed commitments.

Pursuant to the logic of the encyclical letter, at first sight, the consequences of climate change and of the environmental pollution in the broad sense part us, since they affect us unequally. But the fight to restore our common home will have to unite us all to be successful.

I thank you for your support, Holy Father Francis, your commitment that both demands and encourages us.

Thank you, Holy Father Francis, to walk this Road together.