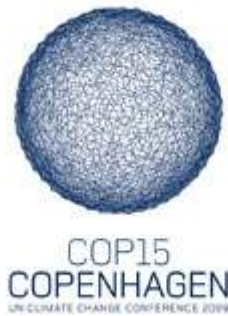


UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE- COPENHAGEN 2009



On 7-18 December 2009 the UN Climate Change Conference took place in Copenhagen gathering the world leaders to work out how to halt climate change. The main outcome of the event is the 'Copenhagen Agreement' which is the result of two years of work and negotiations between the world leaders. The outcome has been denounced as unsatisfactory by most of the involved parties, China being a notable exception. The 'Copenhagen Agreement' is a political declaration to which two decisions are attached, one under the Climate Convention and the other under the Kyoto Protocol. It is these texts which, according to the rules of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

make the agreement binding. Also, the agreement has the effect that the United States, which negotiated and accepted it, is now committed to a binding process. For the EU, nothing changes for the time being: its objective remains to reduce its emissions by 20 per cent by 2020, as set out in the energy-climate package; conditions for increasing this to a 30 per cent reduction have not been met by other parties at this stage. According to the Emissions Trading System Directive, the European Commission should, in the three months following Copenhagen, evaluate the commitments made by other parties before taking a definitive decision. In addition, according to the directive, the European Commission still has until June 2010 to present proposals for possible compensatory measures (import tax) in favour of sectors threatened by carbon leakage. On 22 December 2009 the EU Environment Council of Ministers put together its conclusions which will be a base to the informal meeting of Environment ministers in Seville in January 2010. One of the conclusions states that the EU and its Member States are ready to contribute with fast-start funding of €2.4b annually for the years 2010 to 2012 in the context of implementing the agreement.

HEARINGS OF THE COMMISSIONERS-DESIGNATE

Between 11 and 19 January 2010 the European Parliament will hold a series of public hearings with the 26 candidate Commissioners put forward by the EU Council of Ministers and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso. The Commissioners-designate will face three hours of questioning by Members of European Parliament (MEPs) sitting on the European Parliament (EP) committees relevant to their portfolios. They will be evaluated on their specific knowledge and competence in their field, including their European commitment, their independence and their communication skills. MEPs from the relevant committees will then deliberate before sending their conclusions in writing to the Conference of Presidents (the President of the EP and political group leaders), which will meet with the Conference of Committee Chairs to discuss the results. It is at this point that any possible requests for changes in portfolios or in the composition of the proposed Commission would emerge. EP is scheduled to hold its final vote on the new European Commission on 26 January 2010 at a special plenary session in Brussels. It can only approve or reject the new Commission as a whole. Mr Barroso's nomination for a second term as Commission President was approved by Parliament earlier, on 16 September 2009.



2010 EUROPEAN YEAR FOR COMBATING POVERTY



www.2010againstopoverty.eu

The European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion gets underway on 1 January 2010. A total of 17 million euro has been earmarked for activities throughout the EU as well as in Iceland and Norway. The aim of these events, which should be complemented by national co-financing, is to raise awareness about poverty and social exclusion. Despite attempts by Member States to reduce the number of people who are at risk of poverty, this remains a problem throughout the EU. The year will be launched in Madrid, in January 2010, at a high level conference organised by the Spanish EU Presidency and the European Commission.

PRIORITIES OF SPANISH PRESIDENCY 2010

The Spanish State Secretary for European Affairs recently presented the main priorities of the upcoming Spanish EU Presidency. The EU Presidency rotates between Member States on a six-month basis, with each Presidency identifying and seeking to progress certain priorities. The Presidency chairs, and has some control over, the agenda that ministers discuss when meeting in EU Council of Ministers and in working groups. Given the short duration of each Presidency, the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian Presidencies (the trio) have set out a combined programme for January 2010 to July 2011. The main three priorities of the upcoming Spanish EU Presidency will be the economy, implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and citizen's rights. The main expected actions are: integration of the EU energy policy- a new energy action plan 2010-12; a new social agenda post-2010, a new plan for gender equality for 2011-15; strong involvement in the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion; and implementing the Copenhagen outcome, stepping up Europe's role in the fight against climate change. The Presidency also wishes to see the EU adopt the new '2020' strategy, on which the European Commission presented a consultation paper on 24 November 2009 and a directive on non-discrimination, focused on the issue of violence against women.

OTHER OPEN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – EUROPE FOR CITIZENS

On 30 December 2009 the Official Journal of the EU published a new call for proposal under the Europe for Citizens Programme. The Programme provides the Union with instruments to promote active European citizenship. It puts citizens in the centre and offers them the opportunity to fully assume their responsibility as European citizens. The programme has four different programme actions: **Action I** "Active citizens for Europe" involves citizens directly, either through activities linked to town-twinning or through other kinds of citizens' projects; **Action II** "Active civil society for Europe" is targeted to Europe-wide civil society organisations, receiving either structural support on the basis of their work programme or support trans-national projects; **Action III** "Together for Europe" supports high visibility events, studies and information tools, addressing the widest possible audience across frontiers and making Europe more tangible for its citizens; **Action IV** "Active European Remembrance" supports the preservation of the main sites and archives associated with the deportations and the commemoration of the victims of Nazism and Stalinism. **Various deadlines for each Actions: February to September 2010.**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – MEDIA 2007

The call promotes the development of production projects for European and international markets presented by independent European production companies in animation, creative documentary and drama. **Deadline: 12 April 2010.**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – EU-US COOPERATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Official Journal of the EU has published a new call for proposals under the EU – US Cooperation in higher education, vocational education and training programme. The initiative aims at promoting understanding between the people of the EU and the USA and improving the quality of their human resource development. The programme supports innovative, multilateral, student-centred projects with the potential to stimulate substantive and long lasting structural transatlantic cooperation. The Call is open to higher education and vocational education and training institutions. Accreditation agencies, education agencies, private companies, industry and business groups, non-governmental organisations, research institutes and professional bodies can also benefit from the fund. **Deadline: 8 April 2010.**

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