



President Barroso and all European Commissioners
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

Brussels, 9 January 2014

Dear President Barroso, dear Commissioners,

The Spring Alliance brings together the European Trade Union Confederation, the European Environmental Bureau, the European Platform of Social NGOs, and the development NGO Concord. We are writing to you ahead of the scheduled release of the White Paper on the 2030 climate and energy policy framework to ask you to put forward an ambitious and socially just framework that provides the necessary EU response to climate change.

The post-2020 climate and energy policy framework will need to put the EU on a path towards the upper end of the 80–95% emission reduction goal by 2050 as a minimum in order to stay below the internationally agreed goal of 2 degrees of global warming and mitigate the worst impacts of climate change. Reaching this objective will require a legally binding, three-target approach: greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction, the share of renewable energies in the energy mix and energy savings.

A single greenhouse gas target alone will not adequately promote the entry of renewable energies to the market nor deliver cost-effective energy efficiency measures. Moreover, a greenhouse gas target, complemented by a renewable energy target and an energy savings target, will help to ensure that the competitiveness and employment benefits of EU climate action are fully captured, notably by triggering large investments. Moreover, we believe that a 40% greenhouse gas reduction target, which appears to be backed by some Member States and the Commission, is not sufficient to prevent dangerous climate change, improve competitiveness and tackle impacts of rising energy costs, particularly with a view to protecting vulnerable households.

An agreement on an ambitious 2030 climate and energy policy domestically is also needed to provide a clear commitment towards a successful global agreement on climate change with ambitious commitments from all the major polluters well ahead of the international climate summit in Paris (COP21). It was agreed at COP19 in Warsaw that all governments should announce their post-2020 climate action by the first quarter of 2015. Importantly, the EU GHG target must be achieved domestically in order to ensure maximum benefits to the EU economy.

In order to ensure a socially just framework, energy should not be viewed as a standard commodity, but everyone should be provided access to a sufficient amount of it. Therefore energy poverty and the impact of policies on energy cost should be carefully assessed. EU climate policies should also not infringe on the land and food rights of people in developing countries, and therefore all forms of bioenergy should be subjected to an EU-wide binding social and environmental sustainability framework. Support for energy efficiency measures and the smart use of EU emissions trading scheme (ETS) auctioning revenues to finance a just transition towards a low-carbon and resource-efficient economy, to support the retraining of workers impacted by decarbonisation, to ensure the creation of quality jobs, as well as to contribute to international climate finance are just some examples of how a just transition can be achieved.

Yours sincerely,



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General Secretary
ETUC



Heather Roy
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Jeremy Wates
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Seamus Jeffreson
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