

SPEECH
for pre-recorded video

by
COMMISSIONER JUTTA URPILAINEN
at

**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLE
ON CLIMATE ACTION KAINAKI II TO COP26**

Brussels, 11 December 2020

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

Tomorrow, the Global Ambition Summit celebrates the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement.

This a moment for us to step back, celebrate our global achievements, learn from past mistakes and recognise we need to do more.

And I am very grateful for this timely opportunity to speak to you at today's Pacific Islands Forum Roundtable.

As the second Kainaki Declaration states, "climate change is the single greatest threat" to the region.

I would go even further and say it is the single greatest threat to humanity.

At the outset, let me start by saying how much value we place on having the Pacific by our side in the global fight against climate change.

We are both fully committed and share the same goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

COVID-19 has highlighted how vulnerable we are to deforestation and wildlife trade.

So it is deeply worrying that global warming beyond Paris Agreement limits will generate shocks of a much larger magnitude, and is already undermining the health of millions.

The EU is determined to keep the Paris Agreement at the heart of global and multilateral efforts to tackle climate change.

This is the only way to take on this urgent crisis across our whole planet.

We are also determined to lead by example, as our new growth strategy, the European Green Deal, clearly shows.

But we cannot do it alone.

With our share of global emissions falling, comparable action and increased efforts by other regions will be critical to address the global climate challenge collectively.

This is why we would like to bring the transformative impact of the EU Green Deal to the Pacific with a Green-Blue Alliance between the EU and the Pacific.

This systemic, cross-sectoral alliance will focus on implementing the Nationally Determined Contributions for climate action, and the sustainable use of the Pacific's natural capital.

Finally, let me stress that today, the EU and Member States combined are the world's biggest contributor to climate finance to partner countries with more than 23 billion euros in 2019.

And for the last financial period, climate change-related assistance represented more than a fifth of our external action commitments globally, and nearly half of it in the Pacific.

Dear friends,

With these shared values and commitment to fighting climate change, I am convinced that the partnership between the EU and the Pacific will grow and flourish.

And we look forward to working alongside you for global ambition on climate action.

Thank you for your attention.