

Transcription of the intervention of the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain, Arancha González Laya, at the “Kainaki II to COP26 Climate Action Virtual Roundtable” December 11th 2020.

Thank you for inviting Spain to the Pacific Islands Forum.

The Pacific is part of our history thanks to more than 500 years of exchanges and relations. It is also a key partner to address urgent challenges like climate change.

One year ago we were honored to welcome you in Madrid for COP 25, today we can't meet in person but we remain as strongly committed to our joint objective of fighting climate change, our biggest threat.

We are moving further away from the 1.5 degrees centigrade objective and this would have catastrophic consequences for all of us. For many Pacific islands existential consequences. That is why we need more ambition. This is why we need to act urgently. This is why we need to act now.

A more favorable international context for climate action is emerging, with more and more countries adhering to carbon neutrality and to green recovery. This makes us view COP26 next year with greater optimism. This is certainly the case of Spain and the European Union.

In the EU we are about to see the largest stimulus package in history 1.8 trillion euros with at least 30% of funds marked for green programs.

As for the concrete climate action commitments of Spain, let me mention our long-term de-carbonization strategy, approved just a few weeks ago. It sets the path to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. For this we will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 90% by 2050 as compared to 1990.

Our strategy is based on four pillars:

1. Citizens are at the center of the policies. We will ensure that there is a just transition that leaves no one behind.
2. The strategy integrates agenda perspective on its intertwined with the UN 2030 agenda.
3. We will promote renewable energies
4. Transformations will take into account territorial cohesion, opening up new opportunities for employment.

Spain is committed to action at home but also to support the Pacific countries to face global warming. Through the EU we are supporting this region to face challenges like adaptation to climate change, disaster risk management, sustainable development of ocean natural resources and the promotion of renewable energies.

The Spanish cooperation is working together with many of you to support sustainable energy solutions under the Samoa Pathway. We are also cooperating with Pacific SIDS on areas like adaptation, rural electrification, renewable energies and the protection of the oceans.

Fundamental element in achieving the objectives of the Paris Agreement is the involvement of the financial sector and the channeling of funds for green projects. Spain actively contributes to relevant financial instruments such as the Green Climate Fund, where we have supported the recent approval of projects for Samoa, Vanuatu and Fiji and multi country projects to be implemented in Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga. Moreover both nationally and through EU we are committed to the global goal of making available 100 billion dollars per year by 2020 for climate finance.

Climate action is an absolute moral imperative and a question of international justice. The Pacific can count on Spain to join hands with all of you to watch this objective. Thank you very much and looking forward to keep working for climate justice