



## PRESS RELEASE

No: 718/2016

Date: 19th December 2016

---

### **Gibraltar requests Paris Agreement extension**

The United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon Boris Johnson, signed the UK's acceptance of the Paris Agreement, which relates to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, on 17th November 2016. While this does not extend the Agreement to the UK Overseas Territories, the UK Government is committed to consulting the Territories regarding extensions to include them.

Notwithstanding this, and in order to expedite the process, Minister for the Environment and Climate Change Dr John Cortes has written to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Rt Hon Gregory Clark, requesting that HM Government extend the Agreement to Gibraltar with immediate effect.

Dr John Cortes stated, "Gibraltar takes the environment seriously, and its international responsibilities seriously too, in every area of its activity. It is therefore important that we both be and be seen to be a party to this vitally important Agreement. Already the Government's environment and energy programme, what it has done, and most important, what it is planning to do, are consistent with the commitments of Paris, and we are ready to take our place in the community of nations who are willing to make a difference to the future."

#### **Notes on the Paris Agreement:**

On 12 December 2015, 196 Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted the Paris Agreement, a new legally-binding framework for an internationally coordinated effort to tackle climate change.

The Agreement establishes a global warming goal of well below 2°C on pre-industrial averages. It requires countries to formulate progressively more ambitious climate targets which are consistent with this goal. To achieve this goal, all Parties to the Paris Agreement will need to make profound changes to their economies.

Some key elements of the deal:

- Long term goal: The long-term objective is to make sure that global warming stays "well below" 2 degrees Celsius and to "pursue efforts" to limit the temperature rise to



1.5 C. To achieve this goal, governments pledged to stop the rise in greenhouse gas emissions “as soon as possible”. More significantly, they pledged “to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century” – in other words, reaching a point of “net zero emissions” sometime between 2050 and 2100.

- Emissions targets: In order to reach long term goal, countries agreed to set national targets to reduce GHGs every 5 years.
- Reviewing targets: Initial targets won’t be enough to set the world on a path to meet the long-term temperature goal. Therefore these will be reviewed every 5 years with a view to updating them in the light of more affordable and effective renewable energy solutions.
- Transparency: The agreement has transparency rules that encourage countries to actually do what they say they will do.
- Flexibility: A mechanism for countries to achieve emissions reductions jointly, sharing mitigation targets, and a mechanism for countries to cooperate in achieving emissions reductions. Countries can meet their targets by transferring ‘mitigation outcomes’ internationally – either in the context of emission trading, or to allow results-based payments.
- Adaptation: A global goal of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, and commitment to providing enhanced support for adaptation.

On 5 October 2016, the threshold for entry into force of the Paris Agreement was achieved. The Paris Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016. The first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1) took place in Marrakech, Morocco from 15-18 November 2016.

Of the countries in the surrounding area, Morocco signed up to the Agreement in September, while Spain has yet to do so.