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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate use

‘EU must step up to limit global warming to 1.5°C’ - says ActionAid International as NGO identifies ‘5 tests to stop big temperature rises’ ahead of UN climate negotiations.

LONDON/KATOWICE – Ahead of the United Nations climate talks in Poland beginning on Monday (December 3), ActionAid International has warned that the European Union leadership must step up during these negotiations.

Analysis by ActionAid International has identified 5 tests for ‘keeping the Paris promises’ - the commitments agreed in the global deal in Paris in 2015 - after negotiators failed to make progress during an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP) in Bangkok in September.

Speaking from Katowice ahead of the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) in Poland, Harjeet Singh, ActionAid’s Global Lead on Climate Change, said:

“At this year’s climate talks, countries will agree the rulebook to implement the Paris Agreement. But with negotiations being hosted in Poland, we have a coal-obsessed country in the driver’s seat. The climate talks are being held in the EU’s back yard, so the bloc must play an influential role to ensure a fair and ambitious outcome to make the Paris Agreement real.

“The EU should stop hiding behind the climate-denying Trump administration, which has chosen to walk away from the global deal. If we are to limit warming to 1.5°C, leadership from the EU is needed now, more than ever.”

‘The 5 Tests: Keeping the Paris promises to end big rises’

Analysis by ActionAid International has identified 5 key tests for ‘keeping the Paris promises’; a reference to the Paris Agreement that was signed by 195 countries in 2015.

Keeping the Paris promises, at a time when the U.S. administration is actively mobilising against progress on the Paris Rulebook that will secure implementation of the deal, means:

1. Rich countries delivering on the promised \$100bn per year

Rich countries must make good on their commitment to provide \$100bn per year to finance climate action in poorer countries through the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

2. Fair and urgent contributions for reducing country-level carbon emissions

Keeping global temperature rises below 1.5°C can only be achieved through countries delivering their fair share of reductions in national emissions. Rich countries have done most to cause climate change, yet, currently, poor countries are doing more than rich countries to reduce their own national-level emissions.

3. Ensure that climate actions protect – and do not threaten - human rights

As countries put in place new climate policies to shape industries, food systems and forests, we need to make sure that vulnerable farming communities are not pushed off their lands, or that indigenous peoples are not forced from their forests.

4. Rejecting the ‘false solutions’ to climate change such as ‘Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage’

Many hoped that an approach called “Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage” (BECCS) will be able to suck carbon out of the air, if only they can one day get the technology to work properly.

But BECCs would require so much land to grow tree plantations for bioenergy, that this would lead to widespread hunger and deforestation. And the fact is that this process is not even carbon neutral. It will not halt the rise in global warming.

5. Protections and support for people who are living with the effects of sea level rises, extreme weather and the unpredictable impacts of climate

New protections for people fleeing climate-related disasters are needed, as the Task Force on Displacement prepares to report on its recommendations to COP.

ActionAid International has a delegation of negotiation observers located in Katowice for the duration of the COP meetings.

Notes to editors

ActionAid is an international federation of 45 countries, working with climate-affected communities around the world, with over a decade of experience in monitoring global climate negotiations.

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