COP 22 / CMP 12 / CMA 1 2016
Marrakesh/Morocco

Statement by

H.E. Mr Andrä RUPPRECHTER

Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment

and Water Management

Republic of Austria

Check against delivery!

Mister/Madam President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me at the outset thank the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting this important conference after the landmark Paris Climate Summit last year. This is not the first time Parties have gathered here in the beautiful city of Marrakesh – fifteen years ago the well-known "Marrakesh Accords", the rulebook for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, were sealed here.

Mister/Madam President,
History was made in Paris at the end of last year. And the political momentum and drive in the climate process has continued in 2016, crowned by the rapid entry into force of the Paris Agreement. This was a common effort of Parties from all over the globe. I am proud that Austria was among those Parties whose deposit of the instrument of ratification on October 5 triggered the entry into force of the Agreement.

This year has also seen substantial progress related to climate policies in other fora: The Kigali Amendment on the phase out of HFCs marked a significant contribution towards the targets of the Paris Agreement. I am glad that we were able to contribute substantially to the preparation for this Amendment to the Montreal Protocol in Vienna. The International Civil Aviation Organization has adopted a Global Market Based Measure, reducing the greenhouse gas emission from international aviation. Furthermore first results to reduce emissions from international shipping have been reached. I am convinced that these recently achieved positive outcomes will speed up the further work of the international community.

All these steps are important –but they are just the starting point. We all must do more – and in fact much more – going forward. Meeting the global 2 degrees or indeed the 1.5 degrees target requires the phase out of fossil fuels by mid-century and – in parallel – a significant reduction of overall energy consumption. We have to speed up our efforts on energy efficiency. At the same time, the transition to renewable forms of energy must be dramatically accelerated.

It is essential that the world works together in achieving this energy transition. This needs global and regional cooperation. Within the European Union I have proposed a common European legal framework for energy transition, a European Energy Transition Protocol.

Austria is well underway in meeting its targets in the share of renewable energies. We are in fact close to meeting the target of a 34% share of renewables in final energy consumption for 2020 already today. In addition, we are in the process of developing a national Integrated Climate and Energy Strategy for 2030 and beyond.
But we are not only active at home, we are also actively supporting others, including through climate finance. Austria has been scaling up climate finance annually for five consecutive years now. We contribute to the Green Climate Fund and are part of the group of donors that just published the "Roadmap to the one hundred billion".

Mister/Madam President,
The breakthrough we all achieved in Paris has put even more focus on climate-related measures at all levels. The interest of the business sector in dealing with the challenges and opportunities of climate change is continuously increasing. I commend the Moroccan Presidency for moving forward the involvement of the business sector in our common efforts, which was started in Lima and carried on in Paris. I am very pleased that Austrian companies and research institutions are present in the huge Green Zone here in Marrakesh showing innovative solutions and possible future means to deal with the enormous challenges we face.

Let us join forces together upholding the spirit of Paris; let us make the Marrakech conference the success we owe future generations!

Thank you!