

Translation

**Video Message from
Dr. Angela Merkel,
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany,
to the UN Summit on Climate Change
on 22 September 2009**

**Pre-Recorded on 4 September 2009
--Check against delivery--**

Preserving mankind's vital resources in the long term is arguably the single most important political challenge of our time.

After all, scientific findings leave us in no doubt that climate change is accelerating. It threatens our well-being, our security and our economic development. It will lead to uncontrollable risks and dramatic damage if we do not take resolute counter measures – not in some distant future, but right now.

Of course, this is a huge challenge. It requires courage to embark upon new paths. We need broad-based global alliances to meet this challenge.

The United Nations is the only reliable framework for this. I therefore very much appreciate Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's initiative to host another UN summit addressing this key issue.

We, the international community, bear the responsibility for making sustainable development happen for people around the world.

If we are serious about this, we must set our sights on achieving the ambitious goal of keeping the rise in global temperatures below the critical threshold of 2°C. To do so, we need to reduce global CO₂ emissions by at least 50% by the year 2050. It is now imperative that we join forces to achieve that goal.

For this to happen, we will need to reach an understanding on central issues in the weeks ahead before Copenhagen, ensuring, among other things, that global emissions reach their peak in the year 2020 at the latest.

As a first step, all industrialized countries are called upon to make an up-front contribution.

The member states of the European Union have already committed themselves to reduce their emissions by 20% compared with 1990 levels by the year 2020.

We would even be willing to reduce by 30%, provided that all other industrialized nations make similar efforts.

But this will not be enough. Emerging economies and developing countries also need to make an input. Here, we need to apply the principle of the common but differentiated responsibility, depending on each country's abilities.

Taking responsibility for climate change means gradually decoupling emissions from economic growth.

Germany and the European Union will live up to their commitment to support emerging economies and developing countries in their efforts towards climate-friendly development, both financially and within the framework of technology cooperation. To that end we should agree on an effective financing mechanism.

One thing is certain: only by acting together can the international community prevent the most dangerous effects of climate change. Only if we join forces can mankind as a whole travel down the path of sustainability.

Let there be no mistake: the tasks ahead are as huge as they are complex. Yet, the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen will offer us a unique opportunity to conclude a fair agreement which serves the purpose.

I appeal to all members of the United Nations to do everything in their power to make this watershed conference a success. Together we have the opportunity to set the right course for the future of mankind. Let us take this opportunity now with both hands.