



THE ARCHBISHOP
CHURCH OF SWEDEN
UPPSALA

Uppsala 30th May 2012

To: Mr Donald Tusk Prime Minister of Poland

Honourable Mr President Tusk,

On behalf of Church of Sweden and Diakonia and our global network of faith based organisations and churches, the ACT Alliance – Action of Churches Together, we are taking the liberty to write to you to encourage Poland to play a positive role towards more solidarity and responsibility in upcoming decisions relating to climate change at the EU level.

On 9 March 2012 the Environment Ministers of the European Union were expected to take a position on the European Commission's Communication "A Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050" published in March 2011. This roadmap with its mid- and long term targets has been expected inside and also outside the EU to be a major step providing leadership to contribute to the success implementation of the binding 2 degrees target. However, we have noted with great concern that this roadmap and its milestones for greenhouse gas reductions have not been supported by Poland.

We consider that the roadmap and the milestones are crucial for the EU to take responsibility for mitigating the effects of climate change and to act as a global leader in combating global warming and the harmful effects this already has - especially for developing countries.

It is important to note that these effects are already heavily felt in many developing countries; countries which have not contributed to the accelerating rise in temperatures to the same degree as the industrialised countries. In the light of this we hope and have faith that Poland will reconsider its position in a broader perspective and demonstrate responsibility when it comes to combating the effects of climate change. For us as faith based organisations, this is also a matter of equity and moral responsibility. We fully recognize that, in terms of financial and economic capability, Poland is not yet in as comfortable a position as many of the long-standing EU members. However, the Polish per capita GDP (which is about \$12,000 in 2012) is almost twice that of Bulgaria; four times higher than in Georgia and almost 20 times the amount of Ethiopia. These figures clearly illustrate the tremendous financial challenges faced by countries like Ethiopia in adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change as compared to any European country, including Poland.

Archbishop's Office
SE-751 70 Uppsala

Phone:
+46-18-16 95 00

E-mail:
archbishop@svenskakyrkan.se

We encourage Poland to play a constructive and leading role, as proven in Durban, where joint efforts by the Polish Presidency, the European Commission and all EU negotiators resulted in a global agreement – the so called Durban Platform - to negotiate an international legally binding climate treaty for all States by the end of 2015. We therefore call on you to:

1. Agree on a roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050
2. And to support the 25% domestic EU reduction target for the year 2020.

We are deeply convinced that these important steps will not only be an act of solidarity with the world's poorest and most vulnerable nations but will also ultimately be a beneficial strategy for Poland itself. As you know in order to stimulate the energy sector to make long-term investments required, the market needs confidence and planning security. To maintain the impressive Polish growth rate of 3,8 % in 2010¹, many economic institutions like OECD recommend that Poland should invest in green growth and enhance efficient environmental policies².

If the EU goes from 20% to 30% reduction target, a European analysis³ estimates that Poland will strongly benefit economically⁴. Moreover it is estimated that the unemployment rate in Poland will decrease from 12,5% to 8,5% with a more ambitious target.

Secondly, two thirds of installed coal capacity in Poland is older than 30 years and one third is almost 40 years old. Many existing power stations will have to be replaced in the next years anyhow. Enhancing clean technologies and increasing energy efficiency is not only the way to create new jobs and to spur innovations, but also the most suitable solution to avoid blackouts in the coming years.

Thirdly, the external costs e.g. the cost of public health care, water treatment etc. of the biggest Polish power plants are between \$13-23bn annually⁵, and therefore it will not only make sense from an economic point of view but also from a health perspective for Poland to support ambitious reduction milestones and move beyond the 20%.

Poland is of significant importance for the EU collaboration and therefore also for the pivotal role, that the EU plays in mitigating the effects of climate change at a global level. Thus Church of Sweden, Diakonia and the ACT Alliance encourage you to demonstrate solidarity, show leadership and support the milestones in the low-carbon roadmap proposed by the European Commission and endorsed by all the other 26 member states of the European Union.

Yours sincerely,



Anders Wejryd
Archbishop, Church of Sweden



Bo Forsberg
Director, Diakonia

¹ http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-poland_20752288-table-pol

² http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3746,en_21571361_44315115_50000978_1_1_1_1,00.html

³ A New Growth Path for Europe - Generating Prosperity and Jobs in the Low-Carbon Economy, 2011
Synthesis Report by: Carlo C. Jaeger, Leonidas Paroussos et al.

⁴ This will add an extra 0,7 % to the Polish 2020 growth rate in GDP and the total GDP would increase by 7% by 2020: A New Growth Path for Europe - Generating Prosperity and Jobs in the Low-Carbon Economy, 2011
Synthesis Report by: Carlo C. Jaeger, Leonidas Paroussos et al.

⁵ <http://www.eea.europa.eu/pressroom/newsreleases/industrial-air-pollution-cost-europe>