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Joint Press Release

European Economic and Social Councils' seminar on Climate

At the initiative of the French Economic, Social and Environmental Council and the European Economic and Social Committee, representatives of European ESCs, regional ESCs, groups representing civil society at the UN level and several international organisations met in Paris a few months ahead of COP21 to discuss the impact of climate change on jobs and people.

Participants agreed on the crucial importance of:

- maintaining, through verifiable national commitments, CO₂ emissions at a level that prevents temperatures rising above 2°C, bearing in mind that working conditions have already become more difficult and precarious in certain sectors such as agriculture and construction;
- adopting an ambitious and fair agreement that is legally binding upon all States on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities; and
- securing sufficient and adequate funding to allow every country in the world, especially the most vulnerable, to undertake mitigation and adaptation measures.

Beyond the negotiations, the participants welcomed the gradual rise in international awareness and civic engagement since they are prerequisites for the success of the negotiations and the agenda of solutions envisaged by the French presidency of COP21.

Participants stressed the need to support the transition to a low-carbon economy, a factor for development and job creation, and emphasised the importance of social dialogue, given the challenges involved in ensuring vocational training and a fair transition.

They highlighted the pressing need to discuss the implementation of the COP21 conclusions in parallel with negotiations on the post-2015 agenda. They stressed the necessary reorientation of EU and national policies in this context and emphasised the key role played by civil society, and ESCs in particular, in helping to develop and monitor the implementation of these policies.

Contact

ÉMILIE HUMANN

Tel: +33 7.77.26.24.60

emilie.humann@clai2.com