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The birth of Kyoto

Common declaration of Green/EFA and Green parties

The European Greens celebrate the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol

Eight years after the Kyoto Protocol was agreed, the first international treaty requiring industrial countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions becomes law on 16 February 2005. This is a historic moment for the world because it paves the way for a global policy on what could be the biggest challenge to humanity in the 21st Century. On this historic day, we, the European Greens, call for:

- **Immediate action!**

Emissions from the world's industrialised nations have accumulated in the atmosphere over the past 150 years. We are already beginning to witness the consequences in the form of droughts, heat waves, the melting of the polar ice sheet, and extreme weather around the globe. If the rate at which we are producing pollution continues at current levels, climate change may become something we entirely lose control of in as little as ten years time. Ambitious solutions are needed and are needed now. Because of their high per-capita emission rates industrialised countries must lead the way in reducing emissions. This is the precondition for a fair deal with emerging economies.

- **The EU to deliver**

The Kyoto Protocol's entry into force is one of the most important successes of EU diplomacy. But in order to remain credible the EU must show it is able to meet its target to reduce emissions by 8% during the first 'commitment period' (2008 - 2012). The laws necessary to achieve this have been prepared but the EU Institutions and national governments must take their full responsibilities and:

- Adopt ambitious binding targets for energy efficiency
- Cut harmful subsidies in the aviation sector and introduce an international kerosene tax
- Introduce maximum fuel emission levels for cars and a Europe-wide toll system for lorries
- Make sure that future tradable CO₂ certificates better respect the 'polluter pays' principle
- Implement existing climate-friendly technologies as well as investing in new 'eco-technologies'

The targets set in Kyoto end in 2012, therefore international discussions on what happens after this first commitment period must begin this year. We must find a global solution which can guarantee that global warming does not exceed 2°C above pre-industrial temperatures. The EU must show leadership now and implement the target of reducing emissions by 30% before 2020 and by at least

80% before 2050. The early phase-out of nuclear power will liberate capital for real alternatives.

President Bush withdrew US signature of the Kyoto Protocol and has refused to take any real action to curb US emissions. The US government's response is irresponsible and must in no way be used by Europe as an excuse to delay action. If this situation creates market distortions through unfair competition, the EU should not be afraid to introduce a Kyoto 'non-compliance complaint' against the US in the WTO. The EU could create CO2 border taxes on products coming from industrialised countries that have not ratified the Kyoto agreement to ensure European business is not at a disadvantage against free-riding businesses.

- **Action at all levels**

Action at a local level is crucial to greening public procurement and private consumption as well as improving energy efficiency in buildings and reducing transport emissions. Urgent measures are also needed to curb emissions from internal EU flights and to make sure that international aviation and shipping are part of future global emission reductions. We also need better interaction not just between EU and national governments but also between local and regional policy makers.

- **A world climate day**

The challenge of climate change can only be successfully tackled if all levels of society – citizens, schools, businesses, administrations – know about both the problem and the solutions. Every year the 16th of February should be dedicated to mark the first step in the global fight against climate change – the birth of Kyoto – and should be used to focus attention on the vast amount of work that remains to be done.

Green parties that have so far signed up to the declaration:

- ALTERNATTIVA DEMOKRATIKA - Malta
- BUNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN - Germany
- COMHAONTAS GLAS - Ireland
- CYPRUS GREEN PARTY - Cyprus
- DE GROENEN - the Netherlands
- DEÍ GRÉNG - Luxembourg
- DIE GRÜNEN - Austria
- ECOLO - Belgium
- EESTI ROHELISED - Estonia
- FEDERAZIONE DEI VERDI - Italy
- GREEN PARTY OF ENGLAND AND WALES
- GROEN! - Belgium
- GROENLINKS - the Netherlands
- LES VERTS - France
- LOS VERDES - Spain
- MILJÖPARTIET DE GRÖNA - Sweden
- PRASSINI POLITIKI - Greece
- STRANA ZELENYCH NA SLOVENSKU - Slovakia
- VIHREÄ LIITTO - Finland
- ZIELONI 2004 - Poland

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