

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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### **KWAZULU-NATAL PREMIER CALLS ON THE COP 21 SUMMIT TO REACH A DEAL**

PARIS: KWAZULU-Natal Premier Mr Senzo Mchunu has added his voice to the growing global chorus imploring world leaders to ensure that a legally binding deal is reached at the make or break COP 21 summit taking place here, saying the crunch climate change meeting should mark a turning point “in our quest to create an environmentally sustainable future”.

With negotiations expected to reach a landmark point this week, amid much horse trading, Mchunu warned that the very collective future of humanity was at stake if parties failed to play midwives to the birth of a settlement.

The premier was speaking at the Climate Group gathering on the sidelines of the Cop 21 Summit. The climate group is one of the world’s biggest climate change lobby groups representing more than 31 provinces and cities in the world. Among the members of the group, are the government of British Columbia, the State of California, the Government of South Australia, etc.

The province of KwaZulu-Natal is the only African representative in the group.

Addressing the meeting under the topic, “priorities for 2016 and beyond”, Mchunu said:

“This summit cannot be another missed opportunity, particularly when it comes to the collective contribution we make in the mitigation and adaptation measures to climate change at sub-national level - as states and regions. As the only African representative on this panel, we cannot over-emphasise this point for the obvious reason that the developing world has carried the disproportionate burden of effects of climate change,” he said.

Mchunu said it was because of this reason that developing countries should be favourably prioritised in the proposed climate fund, in line with the principle of **equalisation** and **differentiation**.

The issue of differentiation – the principle that the developed world and the underdeveloped countries are not at the same level of development and therefore cannot be treated equally- is one of the sticky issues, which have pitted the two biggest blocs in the negotiations.

He added:

"We come to this conference faced with a serious challenge of extreme drought in our country owing to the ravaging effects of climate change. Since we are a water-scarce country, we need long-term and sustainable measures such as **desalination** and other **environmentally friendly power generating** interventions.

We are of the view that the current challenge provides us with opportunities for innovation. These, we can achieve by coming up with bankable projects on renewable energy and water resources. As a province, we are ready for new partnerships in this area and we have an enabling environment. At institutional level, we have in place a Provincial Climate Change Council. We are now working on improving its efficacy."

Mchunu also announced that the province intended hosting the African Climate Group summit next year in order to give impetus to the province's effort to deal with issues of climate change.

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**Issued by the Office of the Premier**

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