

Only the spoken text is binding

Saint-Malo Summit

Transcription of the closing address by Mr Jean-Yves Le Drian, President of the Regional Council of Brittany

Thursday 30 October, PM

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the end of this Summit, I would first of all like to thank our speakers taking part in both the plenary sessions and the workshops for the quality of their addresses. I would also like to thank Christine Oberdorff, our facilitator, who gave the event its energy and momentum.

My thanks also go to Christian Guyonvarc'h, Vice-President of the Regional Council, who played a key role in organising this Summit. Extended thanks also go to the technicians of the CPMR and the Regional Council, in particular Renaud Layadi, who coordinated the event with enthusiasm, and working with him, all my colleagues.

When we put forward the idea of such a summit in Montreal three years ago, there were only around ten of us in a small room. We were looking for a way of bringing regions together and I remembered shyly raising my hand and saying, "*maybe we can organise that in Brittany, in Saint-Malo*". This town is no stranger to such initiatives as it is here that a handful of regions decided to create the CPMR in 1973 to influence the decisions of a European Community that had 9 Member States. This handful of regions has become today an organisation of 160 regional governments chaired by Claudio Martini.

I do not know if we have experienced the historic moment I've heard mentioned. Nevertheless, the fact that 100 regions from 60 countries across the world have decided to work together on the issue of climate change is a decisive political act. The representatives of the UN and the European Commission, and their support, have been proved right. As Paul Vergès stressed, we must urgently involve regions in tackling climate change.

I will hazard a parody of Georges Clémenceau who said that "*war is too serious a matter to be left to the military*" by saying that climate change should not only be a matter for national governments. The world is now aware that global warming has become a critical



emergency that must be tackled on all levels of government. Yes, national governments must agree so that the European energy-climate package can go ahead, so that the conferences in Poznań and Copenhagen can be a success. But without regions, the work of national governments cannot be effective and the two levels of government must work closely together. Our summit is the first example of this new order. It may not be a historic moment, but it is certainly an important political act.

I feel that throughout our meetings a shared culture, a breeding ground has formed, spurred on by the experiences shared. Three or four years ago, climate change was not addressed and today it is a shared concern, a general worry that fuels the options facing decision-makers and beyond us, public opinion. We are all the more vehicles of the fight against climate change as we each represent our regions, and it is within them that the opinion is formed.

I would also like to note that we are now in a North/South relationship operating on utterly different terms to what has come before. Northern countries are certainly more responsible for climate change and have more resources, but nevertheless cannot control its worsening. We will see a general decline unless we react, together. It is on these foundations that we must build up a new type of relationship with Southern countries, bearing in mind that these new terms of international dialogue do not create new South/South inequality.

Now we must look at what follows on from our work here. We are at the start of a process. A few guidelines are necessary.

We must further the process we have just initiated. We have entrusted the presidency of our initiative to the State of São Paulo and the Regional Council of Brittany which will be represented by Christian Guyonvarc'h. Our next event has been set for April 2010 in Montevideo and by then we must ensure that our actions are effective and that our toolbox of regional experiences is converted into an operational database. Thirty-three regional experiences have just been presented during the workshops and only skim the surface of what regions have done. We must ensure that this wealth of information and creativity are shared correctly.

We must be driving forces to foster new technologies against climate change. We must help to circulate information, techniques and technologies. Our network can provide a considerable database.

We must share and distribute our methodologies. The action to be taken is likely to lead to reactions marking either people's support or opposition. In this respect, we have everything to learn as the answer to climate change, and Réunion Island is an example of this, is the fruit of raised social awareness.

Lastly, we must innovate. Like you, I am delighted about the agreement signed with the United Nations agencies. This is an unprecedented development as it is the first time that the UN has signed an agreement on a specific objective with a group of regions from across the world. In this respect, we must be extremely watchful over the implementation of the entire process, in particular on how regional climate plans are conducted. We must also provide our skills or at least the expertise that we have gradually gleaned together.

I would like to speak about funding, both public and private, not because we are going to provide additional funding, but because it is an issue that concerns us directly as regions, as operators in the fight against climate change. We have understood that there is a new financial package, unsuspected even a few years ago, and that it is currently being

structured. We must acquire for ourselves this financial engineering to inform Northern and Southern regions of the options open to them.

Global warming is forcing us to conduct a far-reaching and swift revolution if we are to escape its disastrous consequences; social and economic fragmentation, divided territory, withdrawal into oneself, conflict, etc. Failing a flurry of action, we must expect wars for water just as we have experienced wars to gain access to oil. We can also imagine the consequences of climate refugee migrations.

Yet as Nicolas Hulot said earlier, the looming climate crisis has also led to positive risks: understanding our limits, making the choices that will encourage us to think up new types of solidarity, new relationships with others, both regions and local areas, and lastly, finding new types of action for what we are protecting, the well-being of the entire planet.

Thank you for taking part in this first World Summit of Regions against climate change. We look forward to meeting you two years from now in Uruguay.