

Check against delivery

## Saint-Malo Summit

**Jean-Pierre JOUYET**  
*French Minister of State with responsibility for European Affairs*

Wednesday 29 October, AM

To the President of the Regional Council of Brittany, *Jean-Yves le Drian*,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all give my very warm thanks to the Network of regional governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4sd), the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), and the prefectures of Brittany and Ile et Vilaine for their support of this World Summit of Regions.

I am delighted that representatives of regional governments, States, the European Union, NGOs, civil society and several UN agencies have come together here to speak of the future. The fight against climate change is a key challenge that we must all tackle together.

In particular, I firmly believe that regions play a decisive role in the fight against climate change. They take action at a scale that complements that of the national governments and of the European Union, and, very often are driving forces for ideas and concrete experiments for sustainable development. Your involvement is therefore pivotal. Your action will no doubt require investments but these investments are necessary and useful for the future. I assure you that taking action will work out less costly than no action at all.

We are now in an era where natural disasters are of more dramatic proportions. They regularly lead to unprecedented humanitarian crises. The risk of these disasters rising has become a reality. This is why we must act on the actual source of this disorder, we must take far-reaching action on its root.

**SOMMET MONDIAL DES RÉGIONS**  
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It is with this in mind that the French Presidency is currently determinedly negotiating the energy/climate package, on the basis of the Commission's proposals. It is one of the key priorities of our Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Some people would challenge this objective.

Yet, as the French President said once again before the European Parliament in plenary session in Strasbourg on 21 October, what is at stake with this package is the adoption of a daring energy and environment policy that can change our habits and increase Europe's influence as a global player along with the United States, Japan and emerging countries. It would be disastrous to rule out this ambition on the grounds that we have been hit by the economic and financial crisis. On the contrary, this crisis has revealed the collapse of the current growth model based on debt and excessive profitability targets. This is why we need to boost tomorrow's growth through a more sustainable development system that uses less fossil fuels and natural resources. We must give priority to developing low-carbon technology. It is through these types of clean production that we can expect growth to pick up again.

The French President stated what, in our opinion, is non-negotiable:

- we will not go back on the "3x20" target that the EU has set for 2020, i.e. to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 20% (ETS), to increase the share of renewable energy to 20% and to improve energy efficiency by 20%,
- neither will we go back on the schedule: a suitable solution must be found by the end of the year. It is the French Presidency's responsibility to find an ambitious European compromise to prepare the Poznań and Copenhagen conferences.

The European Union therefore needs your help to keep this ambition on target. We are expecting regions to get increasingly involved, particularly when it comes to energy efficiency, renewable energy and ecotourism. This involvement will be conveyed at the very core of the EU by the Committee of the Regions. The Committee's political endorsement of our actions is already proof of success.

The European Union must of course set the example. Yet, beyond this, it must be a pioneer so that other countries across the world can follow it. It is for this reason that today's Summit is of utmost importance, as it brings together representatives from across the globe. Each of you has a pivotal role to play vis-à-vis your national governments and other countries. You must be ambassadors in the fight against climate change and endorse this goal so that the Poznań and Copenhagen conferences can be successful.

Certain regions are particularly affected by climate change-induced natural disasters. You will speak about your experiences this afternoon in the theme-based workshops, for example the depletion of biodiversity, changes in fresh water resources, the far-reaching changes to global agriculture and rising sea levels. In short, today, scarcity is an issue: scarcity of land, air, water and even life, with the loss of biodiversity affecting all living species. This is why we must pool all our energy to preserve the planet's resources.

To meet these targets, innovation is key. On a European scale, we need to develop tools to promote technology, research and innovation. The cohesion policy funds are a key instrument that must improve the competitiveness of European regions and the Union as a whole. In a more general sense, the support of the European Investment Bank and the European structural funds is pivotal in the development of such programmes. The EIB promotes "sustainable, competitive and secure energy", one of the priorities of its 2007-2009 Corporate Operational Plan. This is a first step forward. On a global scale, the Global Environment Facility funds initiatives undertaken to combat the main threats currently facing the planet's environment: loss of biodiversity, climate change, the deterioration of international waters, the thinning of the ozone layer, soil degradation, etc. All these initiatives must be leveraged for more effective results.

It is also through inter-regional cooperation and networking that we will make swifter progress and set up a drive for development. We must foster the sharing of best practices, especially the most innovative among them. To follow on from this action, competitiveness clusters bringing together local networks to work on a joint technology project contribute to the EU's appeal. We must promote this type of strategy.

Your work today is extremely important. As you know, it fully embraces the priorities of our Presidency and goes even further. I wish you every success.

Thank you.