

DEBAT

Thierry DE MONTBRIAL

We are going to take two or three questions, but I will ask the first one myself. As a diplomat, what have you learned in this climate negotiation process, because it is an unprecedented way of diplomacy since it is global for the first time in human history, and in terms of international law and the like, there is discussion around the nature of agreements, soft law, real law and so forth?

Aziz MEKOUAR

Firstly, what I have learned is that it is terribly complicated, and many of these negotiators have been negotiating for 20 years, and it took me from Casablanca to Washington, Washington, Beijing, Washington, Beijing, and back to Casablanca to just learn the acronyms. It is very complicated and the concepts and the topics are so complicated to the degree that the chief negotiators have their own experts for each item. It is complicated because it has major implications on the economy of the countries so it is a very difficult process, and I must say that it is amazing that we have reached an agreement in Paris.

Bertrand BADRE

Thank you very much for your words and congratulations to Morocco for the role you played in maintaining the integrity of the Paris Agreement. I am not a diplomat, I am a man of finance, and I know that everything that we discuss will cost money, and you rightly said public money is in the billions and the need is for trillions. At the same time, we all wonder why you have so much money left with zero rate all over the world. This money will not say, 'Oh, climate change is a great opportunity, we will go there' overnight, so how can we push decisively beyond the circles of diplomats and politicians in the next 2, 3, 4, 5 COPs, to really change the financial system so that they naturally go there?

Aziz MEKOUAR

Private finance is not there for philanthropy, private finance is there to make money, and we have to create the conditions where private money will make money.

Countries have to create the conditions, the environment, and the regulations, first of all to make sure that whoever is investing knows where he is investing and what will happen to his money in 5, 10, 20 years. We had the first meeting of the Scientific Committee at COP22 here in Morocco, and it was very interesting because the renewable energy people, the agriculture people, and the water people were saying, 'Well, we did this. We created this regulation. We raised this money. We created this capacity building', and at the end of three hours I said 'Well, we have very good examples of how to attract money because some of the projects were financed by public money, but a lot was private money. Let me give you an example, I have a friend who set up a renewable energy fund in Senegal, and she has already raised something like 100 million dollars, and the return on investment will be 16%. It can work, especially because today the cost of production of renewable energy is going down and down. For instance, I hear that the Saudis are creating a farm where the cost will be 1.7 cent per kilowatt, which is amazing. I think that it is about countries creating real regulations so investors can come, and gradually see that it is a good business. Some years ago, Texas did not have any wind farms, today it is number one in the United States in terms of wind energy, and why are people investing, why are countries investing, why are companies investing? Because there is a good return on investment.

Tatsuo MASUDA, Visiting professor at the Graduate School of Nagoya University of Commerce and Business (NUCB) Thank you very much Mr Ambassador. Tatsuo Masuda from Japan, I teach energy and climate change at NUCB in Japan. What you talked about is thrilling to me. I have a student who just came back from Japan, whom I taught, and he is working on climate change. You talk about the importance of non-state actors, I agree with you, and



there are many initiatives taken from non-state actors, like Breakthrough Energy Coalition, this is technology, but if there are any areas where those initiatives are missing from your point of view, which would be the area where you would like to see more non-state actors?

Aziz MEKOUAR

Many of the big companies in France have a carbon price, for instance, internal carbon pricing. Nobody agrees on carbon pricing and international carbon pricing for the time being, but it is happening. It is happening internally in companies, but it is also happening between, for instance, the State of California and some states in Canada. I see more cooperation between companies, states, cities, working together to lower the emissions of Green House Gas.