

**AMBASSADOR ROY BARRERAS' REMARKS AT APPG
EVENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

Tuesday, 24 October 2023

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen!

The Right Honourable Graham Stuart MP, Minister for UK Energy Security and Net Zero; Professor Jim Skea, Chair of the IPCC; Ms Kirsty Townsend, Head of Strategy at Ørsted; The Honourable Kerry McCarthy MP, Shadow Climate Minister; and all other distinguished guests:

I am Roy Barreras. I am honoured to share this important space with you today, not only as Ambassador of Colombia to the United Kingdom, but also as a former member of the Colombian Congress.

I then greet you from the country of beauty, one of the world's "megadiverse" countries, hosting close to 10% of the planet's biodiversity, and from the country that ranks first in bird and orchid species diversity and second in plants, butterflies, freshwater fishes, and amphibians. A country with two oceans, a country with the river and the Amazon jungle forest, the lung of the world, the factory of air that we all breathe in this generation and for the unborn generation.

Even if Colombia is just a marginal emitter of greenhouse gases and a major hydroelectricity producer, **my country and is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change** due to its physical, geographical, and socioeconomic characteristics. At the same time, it is a wonderful source of clean energies, in particular, wind and solar.

Climate-related natural disasters **do affect** our ecosystems. For example, droughts in the Andes impact the whole country's access to water reserves.

This a **tragedy** since, as you may know, seventy percent of the world's *paramos*, these fragile ecosystems that are natural factories of drinking water, lie on Colombian soil. These sources of life are vital and available to the whole humanity.

Considering these powerful reasons, the National Government, led by President Gustavo Petro -**a champion of the fight against climate change-**

, has set out **Energy Transition** as one its three key pillars and has framed it as “**environmental justice**”.

In doing so, and in compliance with the “Paris Agreement” and bearing in mind the development of non-conventional renewable energies, last August, while hosting the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy, Dan Jørgensen, Colombia’s Minister of Mines and Energy, Andrés Camacho, made the decision for Colombia to join the “**Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance**”, as a friend.

Furthermore, last September, Colombia also decided to join the “Powering Past Coal Alliance”, which is led by Canada and the UK. Such decision is quite meaningful and was not easy to make since Colombia is one of the world’s sixth-largest coal exporters.

Indeed, these two high-level political decisions do demonstrate Colombia’s commitment to addressing three main global threats: global warming, biodiversity loss and air and ocean pollution.

Finally, I want to highlight that, with a view to COP28, as a country that puts the protection of life above any other priority, Colombia has two main expectations:

On the one hand, to gain support for a political vehicle that enables the **adoption of innovative climate financing solutions such as debt swaps for climate action and nature conservation**.

Secondly, Colombia advocates for the international community to go beyond the 2030 Agenda and work together to generate true Sustainable Development, based on decarbonized economies, clean energy, and the respect for the rights of Life and Nature.

Thank you!