

## POSITION PAPER

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### **American Chamber of Commerce in Germany e.V.**

Stance toward the anticipated universal climate protection agreement at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris

*October 2015*

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The American Chamber of Commerce in Germany e.V. (AmCham Germany) and its member companies are committed to integrating the principles of environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) into their daily business activities. In particular, corporate responsibility and sustainability have traditionally been firmly embedded within companies of German-American origin and those located in the U.S. Even Henry Ford already supported the tenets of sustainability in his day by saying: "A business that makes nothing but money is a poor business."

By investing in research and development, resource conservation, improvements in efficiency and reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, AmCham Germany's member companies already make a major contribution to climate protection and take initiative to operate their businesses in accordance with environmental and societal aspects, thereby reflecting the values of the Honorable Merchant.

AmCham Germany firmly advocates and supports the endeavors of the global community at the UN Climate Change Conference in December 2015 in Paris (COP21) to achieve an ambitious international climate agreement, which would be globally binding and would highlight new ways and structured processes to limit global warming to 2°C above pre-industrialization levels. With such an agreement, signatories should be obliged to implement comprehensive and long-term strategies that help realize the afore-mentioned goals. These should be comparable and similarly ambitious for all competing regions and countries.

Implementing a universal climate agreement requires the (active) involvement of all public, private and civic stakeholders. In particular, the central role and competence of the private sector should be adequately recognized and considered in such an agreement. Enterprises are the driving force behind the development and market introduction of many new climate-friendly technologies. For this reason, representatives of the private sector and economic organizations should be adequately considered when implementing a climate protection agreement.

A climate protection agreement should also be synchronized with other international efforts – such as trade agreements and the Post-2015 Agenda – and foster sustainable innovation as well as global trade and investment, thereby systematically contributing to global sustainable development.

For this purpose, a reliable and transparent regulatory framework is necessary to guarantee long-term reliability in investment planning. Effective measures of political climate protection include market-oriented instruments, such as the creation of secure and multinational emissions trading schemes that are based on certain market mechanisms. As a consequence, these mechanisms boost the development, expansion and distribution of climate-friendly technologies, products and solutions, and they also help to reduce tariff and non-tariff trading barriers – particularly for efficient and sustainable environmental technologies. Promoting a clean and

efficient energy supply, along with creating incentives to further advance climate-friendly technologies, constitute other efficient measures in the framework of an effective global climate protection policy.

AmCham Germany calls on all stakeholders to strongly support long-term developments instead of short-term and short-sighted priorities, keeping in mind the well-being of future generations. The UN Climate Change Conference in December 2015 offers a historic opportunity to create a stable and long-term framework for achieving the two-degree goal, which also provides companies with reliable investment planning, promotes innovation and enables comprehensive investments in the research and development of climate-friendly technologies. We are convinced that – under appropriate conditions – the innovativeness and export strength of German and American companies can significantly contribute to shaping a climate-friendly and sustainable future.

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