



**10 Minutes for the Planet**  
**#Make Our Planet Great Again** ©  
*by Valentine Rinner*



Hello everyone and welcome to this week's episode of 10 Minutes for the Planet. On June 1st, US President, Donald Trump, confirmed the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris climate agreement.

He stated : "In order to fulfil their solemn duty to the United States and its citizens, the US will withdraw from the Paris climate accord, but begin negotiations to re-enter either the Paris accords or a really entirely new transaction, on terms that are fair to the United States". Trump's argument being that the Paris agreement put the United States at a disadvantage to the benefit of other countries.

Much confusion has come of his argument, as the Paris agreement is non-binding. The agreement sets a common goal of limiting global warming to a 2 degrees increase, however, each country is allowed to choose its own reduction goals and no penalty is applied if they are not abided by.

The agreement was of great importance, not for its ambition, but because it literally made history: it was the first time that 196 countries signed an agreement on the necessity of climate action, putting in place a global framework to support the action. Withdrawing is an ideological move, that was one of Trump's campaign promises and satisfied his anti-UN supporters.

In his speech Trump added : "I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris." To which the Pittsburgh Mayor promptly responded that he did not approve of the President's move – he is one of 70% of all Americans who support the Paris agreement.

At the international level, German, French and Italian leaders immediately reaffirmed their positions on the agreement, stating: "We deem the momentum generated in Paris in December 2015 irreversible, and we firmly believe that the Paris agreement cannot be renegotiated, since it is a vital instrument for our planet, societies and economies." All around the world, from Australia to Canada, came out a range disappointed reactions, from polite to furious. Even the Vatican tweeted about the "slap in the face" that President Trump's actions represented.

Emmanuel Macron went further than simply expressing his disappointment. He issued a short video, in both French and English, telling American scientists and citizens, unhappy by the decision, that they would find a second homeland in France, inviting them to work with France to find climate solutions, with a hint of insolence: to "make the planet great

again". This play on Trump's campaign slogan "make America great again" was tweeted minutes later as a graphic that went completely viral, with hundreds of thousands of likes and retweets – the #MakeOurPlanetGreatAgain hashtag is now "a thing". Only days later, on June 8th, Macron released a new website: [www.makeourplanetgreatagain.fr](http://www.makeourplanetgreatagain.fr) to "help you come work with us on our common challenges [...] Our new challenge? Climate change."

The website is addressed to researchers, businesses, NGOs or students and compiles all of the needed information to come to France to fight climate change. As of today, the approved budget towards climate change research in France is more than 20 times smaller than in the US. The government isn't announcing new research positions or extra funding but says they are looking into co-fundings. Let's keep an eye on what will follow Macron's initiative!

See you next for a new episode of 10 Minutes for the Planet