

## **EU disappointed over countries not committing to Kyoto Protocol**

Bonn, 13 June (Hilary Chiew) – The European Union at an in-session workshop at the climate talks in Bonn expressed disappointment over the announcement by Japan, Canada and the Russian Federation that they will not commit to a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gases emissions. The EU described this as a step backward with political implications for the process.

The EU was referring to the statements made by Canada, Japan and Russia who have made clear that they will not make further emissions reduction commitments under the Kyoto Protocol following the expiry of the first commitment period in December 2012.

The EU made these observations at an in-session workshop held in Bonn under the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) on 9 June. The workshop was held for developed country Parties to clarify their assumptions and conditions related to the attainment of quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets.

Presentations by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and others at the workshop also revealed that there was sufficient information to show that the current emission reduction pledges are not going to limit temperature rise to 2 degrees C by the end of the century.

UNEP's Climate Change Coordinator Kaveh Zahedi said there were multiple reports from different groups which showed convergence on the numbers. UNEP's Emissions Gap Report published ahead of the Cancun Conference last December assessed the sufficiency of pledges by countries which signed up to the Copenhagen Accord in limiting global warming to 2 degrees or 1.5 degrees C. Zahedi said the report showed that neither the most nor the least ambitious pledges

will limit temperature rise by 2 degrees C. At best, there will be a 5 gigaton (Gt) gap of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent in emissions reductions and at worst (under business-as-usual, without actions) a 12 Gt gap.

Following promises of climate financing and ensuring stricter rules on Land-use, Land-use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) and surplus emission units (AAUs), Parties will only achieve 60% of what is needed which still leaves us with a reduction in emissions of 7 Gt of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent and a gap of 5 Gt, said Zahedi. To stay below 2 degree C, atmospheric cumulative emissions should not exceed 44 Gt CO<sub>2</sub>, equivalent by 2020 but all the analyses, said UNEP, showed that countries are missing the mark.

The in-session workshop saw presentations from **Canada, the EU, Alliance Of Small Island States, Switzerland, Ireland, Denmark, Bolivia, Czech Republic, United States, UNEP, the UNFCCC and Climate Action Network International.**

The EU told the workshop that it had succeeded in decoupling its economic growth from emissions growth and it has put in place legislation to achieve the 20% reduction target by 2020 from 2013 onwards. It also acknowledged that there was a clear 'ambition gap' to limit the temperature rise to below 2 degrees C, adding that the pledges of Annex I countries range from reductions of 13 to 18% by 2020 compared to 1990 levels while the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) refers to a reduction of 25-40% by developed countries. The EU also expected deviation from business-as-usual (BAU) from developing countries, especially the most advanced among them and referred to the IPCC figures for reductions of 15 to 30% deviation from BAU by 2020.

**Climate Action Network's Jan Kowalzig** disagreed with Parties who say that there was need to review the data on mitigation gap instead of addressing it as scientific findings already warning of the dire situation. He said while addressing the gap may be politically difficult for some Parties, they should "not say that doing less will be consistent with staying below the required 2 degrees C." In his presentation, Kowalzig said developing countries' pledges will result in more emissions saving than developed countries, adding that the latter's pledges are far below what the IPCC recommends. He asked developed country Parties to reflect on which other countries are going to compensate (for the low ambition) and if the pledges are in line with the Parties' fair share of the globally needed mitigation efforts.

The **UNFCCC secretariat** presented its technical paper on the targets by developed country Parties to the Convention where it said many Parties' higher targets are conditional on achieving a comprehensive global agreement with the participation of all major economies with advanced economies agreeing to comparable mitigation efforts and developing countries taking action in accordance with their differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Many Parties' targets are conditional on the definition of the rules for the use of market based mechanisms and LULUCF. Based on the pledges, it said that emission reductions of developed country Parties in 2020 in aggregate amount to 13 per cent to 18 per cent below 1990 levels for the low and high targets, respectively (emission levels excluding LULUCF).

**The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** said global sea level rise is projected to rise by 0.9 to 1.6 meters by 2100, according to the latest scientific report, which factors in rapid ice sheet loss. It said combining loose LULUCF rules and AAUs (Assigned Amount Units) carryover, Annex I pledges are effectively reduced to minus 1 to 7% which are even less ambitious than the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period (of 5%). It proposed concrete measures to close the gap, including (1) increase level of ambition and action; (2) cap LULUCF credits, remove exceptions; (3) no carryover of surplus AAUs. It also cited the newly released IPCC Report on Renewable Energy Sources to emphasize that renewables are available and feasible.

**Bolivia** in its presentation said that there is need

to avoid the trap of "rules first before setting targets" as demanded by developed countries. The Annex 1 emission reduction commitments need to be understood in absolute terms and for the emissions reductions and abatement expressed in Gt of CO<sub>2</sub>eq. There are issues if these commitments are going to be done domestically with no offsets and if there is a comparability of efforts between all Annex I countries. It said that there was no time for a new legally binding agreement for Durban, South Africa. The only option, Bolivia said, is the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and suggested the creation of an ad-hoc working group to discuss legal actions that will be taken in relation to those Parties that do not want to fulfill their obligations under the Kyoto Protocol or the Convention.

**Canada** said it was making progress to decouple emissions from economic growth and it has a plan to pursue systematic sector-by-sector regulations in meeting its emissions reductions pledge of 17% from 2005 level by 2020 which amount to 607 megatons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. Its target of 17% will exclude international offsets.

**Philippines** in response asked how Canada intended to comply with its target under the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol which was 6% below 1990 levels when its current pledge translates to a 3% reduction based on 1990 levels, in effect an increase in emissions while others were on the path of reducing emissions. In response, Canada said that it will continue with its reporting requirements and will assess its commitment at the end of the first commitment period (December 2012).

The **United States** was represented by **Dr. Jonathan Pershing** who in his presentation emphasized the role of reporting and international assessment and review in clarifying emissions reduction targets, and called for more robust review of national data and opportunity to ask questions. He said it is not adequate to produce national communications but countries want to ask questions to dig more deeply and to elaborate what has been done already. He stressed the need for more regular review with in-country visits. This, he said was not a punitive exercise, but it is to build understanding and a better sense of what countries are doing. It should include a written procedure where one country can write to another and expect a response, something which a workshop cannot allocate enough time to do.

At question time, the European Union asked the US to clarify how it was going to deliver its targets with difficulties in Congress. In response, Dr Pershing admitted that he did not know how.

(At a pre-session workshop on the emission reduction targets by developed country Parties held in Bangkok on 3 April, Pershing said until last year, President Obama's administration had been pursuing a cap and trade programme but this did not pass through the US Congress. Since then, the US has been working on alternative policies with a fundamentally increased level of support for clean energy, energy efficiency etc. The US made a pledge of 17% emission reductions by 2020 from 2005 levels at the 2009 Copenhagen conference.)

**Switzerland** said it is committed to 20% emission reduction by year 2020, which will be entirely achieved domestically. One quarter of any additional reduction should be done domestically in a similar fashion.

In conclusion, workshop facilitator Jose Alberto Garibaldi of Peru summarised that there is ambition by all as made abundantly clear by the panel and that everyone believes that the emission gap needs to be closed and Parties need to move forward in this aspect and not backtrack. He also underscored the importance of addressing loopholes in accounting rules.