

Need for link between mitigation, adaptation and finance – say developing countries

Bonn, 22 October (Indrajit Bose) - A large number of developing countries said they want to establish a clear link in the 2015 climate agreement between the level of mitigation effort undertaken by developed countries and the support required for resulting adaptation needs. Further, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) also added that residual loss and damage must be part of the equation.

These views were expressed at a contact group meeting of the UNFCCC's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Actions (ADP) held on 21 October in Bonn, Germany. Parties were discussing how adaptation should figure in the 2015 agreement. The ADP is meeting on 20-25 October.

Discussions on adaptation were broadly categorized on long-term and collective aspects of adaptation, global goal on adaptation, commitments on adaptation, and institutional arrangements, cooperation and coordination. Many Parties also expressed their views on the Warsaw Mechanism on loss and damage during the discussions on adaptation. The morning session on adaptation was chaired by ADP Co-chair Kishan Kumarsingh (Trinidad and Tobago).

At the outset of the meeting, speaking for the **Group of 77 (G77) and China, Bolivia** expressed concerns about the process, hoping that they would be addressed early enough. It proposed that all Parties should delve deeper and directly into the negotiations process. "It is important to listen to each other. We need a more interactive and dynamic process. We need to question. We need clarifications and to look for common ground, even texts, if possible," said Bolivia. It called for negotiations on controversial issues and not just for Parties to

make statements. Bolivia said to guarantee a successful meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP) in Lima at the end of the year, it was crucial to advance as much as possible the different elements of the 2015 agreement.

(The G77 statement was prompted by growing rumbles from several developing country delegates that real negotiations in a formal setting had really not begun as Parties were still expressing their views on issues as they had done before since the beginning of the ADP process, and were not engaged in any text based negotiations).

In response to the G77 and China, Co-chair Kumarsingh urged Parties to move into a negotiations mode rather than stating their positions on issues. Later in the day, following interventions on the adaptation issue, Kumarsingh asked Parties to meet informally to discuss and resolve divergent views on the matter in another dedicated room if they so wished, and asked Bolivia and Switzerland to convene the meeting).

In the contact group, stark differences prevailed over the views of developed and developing countries on how adaptation should figure in the 2015 agreement.

While stressing the importance of adaptation in the 2015 agreement, several developed countries noted that climate change affects all countries, and therefore all countries will have adaptation challenges. **Switzerland** was of the view that adaptation should not be linked to mitigation or support, stating that there should be no objective established in the agreement on support for adaptation.

Other developed countries also spoke in reaction to proposals by many developing countries for a

global adaptation goal that linked adaptation support to the level of mitigation, stating that adaptation should not be linked to mitigation efforts of developed countries. Several said that a global goal on adaptation could only be qualitative. Many of them stressed that adaptation is a national priority and that countries must share experiences and lessons learnt. **Australia** was opposed to loss and damage being featured in the 2015 agreement.

Developing countries articulated their response clearly and said that they would not settle for such an approach.

Bolivia, speaking for the **G77 and China** reminded the developed country Parties of Article 4.4 of the Convention, which states that: *“The developed country Parties and other developed Parties included in Annex II shall also assist the developing country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change in meeting costs of adaptation to those adverse effects.”*

(Annex II Parties have commitments to provide financial resources as provided in Article 4.)

Nicaragua stressed that there is no need to rewrite the principles and provisions of the Convention and that it is very unfair that developing countries are continuing to carry the burden of climate change.

Jordan said that the mandate of ADP is to enhance action; hence finance in relation to adaptation cannot be a means, but is a key aspect of the enhanced action in the post-2020 world.

South Africa added that there is a relationship between mitigation and adaptation is line with the ultimate objective of the Convention (i.e. “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”).

Timor-Leste had some strong responses lined up. “Some developed countries say adaptation is the responsibility of national governments. We need to speak about the commitments of the developed countries under the Convention,” it said. To Canada and Australia’s statements that adaptation is a national responsibility, it said that there is also a global responsibility and that is common but differentiated responsibility. Referring to the European Union’s statements on building on past experiences, it said that Timor-Leste had

experienced a gap in finance and a long-term adaptation goal would be about filling the gap.

The following are the highlights of interventions that Parties made during the session:

Bolivia, speaking for G77 and China, responding to interventions by several developed countries said that it is worrisome that planning in relation to adaptation and reporting are seen as the only obligations they have. Stating that adaptation is an important issue is nothing new. What is more important is to see the elements that will help developing countries to put in place mechanisms to address adaptation needs. Adaptation is an additional burden on developing countries. In the agreement therefore, it needs to be reflected how developing countries will be better equipped to deal with the issue, said Bolivia. It stressed the link between finance and adaptation and said that there needs to be clear reflection of a financial commitment, which should be over and above that of official development assistance. On adaptation finance, it reminded Parties of Article 4.4 of the Convention.

While the process of national communications is necessary, Bolivia called for additional steps to step up communication. National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) need to allow for needs assessment, assessment of support and monitoring, review and verification (MRV) of support. Bolivia also called for the recognition that developing countries are doing a lot on their own accord to address adaptation.

On loss and damage, it said emphatically that it must be part of the 2015 agreement as it is a reality for developing countries.

Speaking for the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)**, **Tuvalu** said it is critical that adaptation is a fundamental element in the 2015 agreement. New institutions are required to facilitate adaptation work on the ground. Appropriate means of implementation are required to ensure adaptation efforts are commensurate with requirements on the ground and it is the same for loss and damage. It added that adaptation should be country driven, gender sensitive, follow a transparent process and should be incorporated firmly in the 2015 agreement. It called on all Parties to produce adaptation plans, and sub-national and local plans where applicable and stressed on the importance of education and public awareness programmes.

Tuvalu called on Annex II Parties to provide financial, technical and capacity building support to developing countries, especially to the Small Island Developing States (SIDs), LDCs and African countries. It called for the Adaptation Fund (AF) to be incorporated within the agreement and for innovative funding sources to be explored. It also called for an international clearing-house registry to provide information on adaptation technologies and measures. The registry should provide a roster of experts and come up with biennial expert reports, it said.

Highlighting the importance of research, Tuvalu said that it is important to have scientific models to help vulnerable countries and called for a climate change observing system to be established. The agreement should enable development assistance programmes on these measures. It reiterated its call that Annex II Parties to provide regular reporting on the support they provide to developing countries on adaptation in the form of biennial adaptation support reports. Tuvalu also stressed that the loss and damage mechanism should be anchored in the agreement.

Speaking for **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**, **Nauru** said Parties needed to define the relationship between mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage and that the special situation of the SIDs must be taken into account. Climate change cannot be framed as (just) a sustainable development issue for the SIDs; it is a matter of life and death, AOSIS said. It called for enhancing actions on adaptation in the context of the global temperature goal. It called for strengthening existing institutions and for the Adaptation Committee (AC) to be the central institution to deal with adaptation. This must be anchored in the agreement, it said. Loss and damage must be included as a separate element in the agreement and it called for a dedicated time and space to discuss the issue during the current ADP meeting.

Speaking for the **Africa Group**, **Sudan** said NAPs are an entry point of adaptation actions and that adaptation needs in developing countries strongly correlate to mitigation ambition. It said that the reality of a mitigation goal would define the adaptation needs in developing countries and that it would be interested to understand the logic behind the difficulty of linking mitigation, adaptation and finance. It also underscored the need to

operationalize Article 4 of the Convention (on commitments) and said that support from Annex II Parties must be based on agreed accounting rules.

Speaking for the **Independent Association of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)**, **Mexico** said the post-2020 climate regime presents a “unique opportunity” to promote action and raise the political importance of adaptation. It appealed for an agreement in which all Parties, as per their respective capacities, reduce climate impacts and vulnerability of people by restricting temperature increase. It called on Parties to address the issue of metrics (in reference to progress on adaptation being assessed through metrics and indicators). It suggested the issue can be addressed by using a set of indicators for marginalization, reduction in settlements, economic losses, increase in national funding, strengthening of governance etc. It called for a process to be launched in Lima during COP 20 for assessment of adaptation metrics and indicators. Mexico also called on Parties to share knowledge and experiences on adaptation.

Costa Rica also spoke for **AILAC** and called for strengthening of institutional arrangements, effective and enhanced implementation of Cancun Adaptation Framework. It called for international funds for adaptation to significantly enhance support for adaptation needs. The AF should be inscribed in the new climate regime and levies from specific financial mechanisms such as the Clean Development Mechanism must be established for adaptation support. It also called for including a levy on any market mechanism for adaptation support. It further called for an adaptation technology and knowledge platform, which should focus on methodologies, metrics and indicators in specific geographic conditions, vulnerability assessments, methods for quantification of non-economic losses and so on. The platform should be included in the agreement, said Costa Rica said.

Nicaragua stressed that there is no need to rewrite the principles and provisions of the Convention. It said that developing countries must defend their right to sustainable development and that adaptation is a priority. “We are a highly vulnerable country. If it is not a drought, it is a hurricane,” it said, adding that it is very unfair that developing countries are continuing to carry the burden of climate change.

It called for the right balance in financing and mitigation in the 2015 agreement. “There cannot be any ‘ifs’ and ‘buts’ here. Adaptation and mitigation are on an equal footing. Anything else is not acceptable,” it stressed.

China said that adaptation needs in developing countries in the short and medium term are the direct result of historic(al) greenhouse gas emissions of developed countries. This is why developed countries should take the responsibility of supporting adaptation activities of developing countries in terms of finance, technology and capacity building, as provided for in the Convention. Thus, adaptation should be addressed in the 2015 agreement as one of the important factors and in a balanced way with mitigation. The elements for adaptation should consider the global goal, finance, technology, capacity building and transparency.

On long-term and collective aspects of adaptation, China said that the global goal should focus on how to set such a goal for adaptation; how to facilitate the implementation of adaptation particularly in developing countries, as well as how to develop common metrics to assess adaptation progress.

It called on developed countries to provide at least USD 50 billion per year from 2020-2025, at least USD 100 billion per year by 2030 to fulfill their commitment under Articles 4.4, 4.5, 4.8 and 4.9 of the Convention. This support should be additional to ODA and should come from public sources, said China. On commitments on adaptation, China said all commitments for Parties should reflect the principles of the Convention, including equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

On institutional arrangements, cooperation and coordination, China said that existing institutional arrangements relevant to adaptation, including the AC, Technology Executive Committee (TEC), Standing Committee on Finance (SCF), etc. should be effectively coordinated, implemented and fully financed. The mandate of the AC should be enhanced to effectively coordinate all activities related to adaptation, including strengthening its linkages with TEC, SCF and Green Climate Fund (GCF), providing technical support for adaptation project applications from developing countries, and evaluating the adaptation supporting

information from biennial reports of developed countries.

On loss and damage, China said that so far there is neither reliable methodology nor sufficient data and integrated model results to develop a working mechanism for loss and damage, and therefore a discussion for methodology could be fully integrated in the 2015 agreement.

Jordan said that adaptation should be treated as a matter of collective responsibility even though it is a country-driven process. Developing country Parties’ adaptation actions should be supported by developed country Parties in terms of financing, technology and capacity building. The 2015 agreement should include common as well as individual commitment on adaptation, it said.

On individual commitment, it said that developed countries must implement adaptation actions in their own country as well as support adaptation in developing countries. Developing countries should formulate adaptation plans and implement adaptation action, build on existing mechanisms and processes for NAPs and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) with support from developed countries.

On institutional arrangements, it said that while existing institutional arrangements should be furthered, new arrangements should be added, including a registry to record national adaptation actions/programmes to ensure that all interested developing countries are able to formulate and implement NAPs. The mandate of ADP is to enhance action, so finance for adaptation is not a means but one key aspect of the enhanced action for post-2020, it said.

Brazil said it is redundant to talk about the importance of adaptation as it is already in the Convention. It underscored that for the 2015 agreement to be effective, developing countries needed to see how finance will flow from the agreement to effective action on the ground. It liked the idea of a registry and for the need to showcase technologies. It also called for more power to be given to the Cancun Adaptation Framework.

South Africa also said that there is a relationship between mitigation and adaptation and it is line with the ultimate objective of the Convention. This common goal can be made implementable by common commitments and individual

commitments, it said. It expressed interest in the LDCs' proposals and added that loss and damage must be a separate part of the agreement.

Timor Leste said that adaptation needs to be linked to long-term mitigation measures. "Some developed countries say adaptation is the responsibility of national governments. We need to speak about the commitments of the developed countries under the Convention ... Canada and Australia say adaptation is a national responsibility but there is also a global responsibility and that is the common but differentiated responsibility", it said. Timor Leste called for a long-term adaptation goal based on the current mechanism and the Cancun Adaptation Framework is one of them.

Referring to the EU's statements on building on past experiences, Timor Leste said that its past experiences revealed that there is a gap in financing. "For us, long term adaptation goal will be about filling this gap—the in finance, technology, capacity and other related issues," it emphasized.

India stressed on how vulnerable it is to climate change and added that adaptation is a real and current requirement for the country. It spoke of its dedicated National Adaptation Fund which it has established in the recent past.

India said it is involved in myriad adaptation actions at the national and state level. However, such efforts fall far short of the real requirements of funds and human resources and would therefore require international funding. It called for complete parity and balance between mitigation and adaptation and said it would not accept any dilution of the importance of adaptation in any climate change agreement.

Pointing to the urgent need to strengthen institutional arrangements supporting adaptation, India talked of the limitations of the AF and said that it has meager funds and the process is long drawn. "Taking into account the current availability of funds and the future prospects of resources, the existing mechanism will not be able to meet even a fraction of requirement of adaptation activities in the developing countries," said India. It called for the strengthening of the AF in the 2015 agreement. It added that alternative sources of funds should be considered. The funding for the adaptation component of the GCF should include

preparation of a national adaptation strategy with provision to update it periodically.

Switzerland said that adaptation is a challenge and every country in the world is facing the problem. Therefore, adaptation must not be seen in the context of dividing the world as developed and developing countries. It added that the adaptation goal should be political and qualitative and should focus on promoting resilience, prioritizing and integrating national policies. It said that it was not in favour of a goal linking adaptation to mitigation or to support, adding that finance is only a tool and any commitment on finance should be dealt with separately. While acknowledging the link between finance and adaptation, Switzerland said that each country has to invest resources. "Some countries need support, not all countries," it said.

According to Switzerland, adaptation must be a commitment for all and each Party should formulate NAPs as well as policies and commit to mainstream and implement adaptation into its respective their policies. Parties must commit to submit national plans. It was also against reference to any new institutional arrangements in the agreement. "We do not see the need to establish new institutions through the agreement. We need a COP decision to look at the existing institutions and if we detect gaps in them, we develop them through COP decisions," said Switzerland.

The **European Union** talked of getting into the planning process and called for a dynamic approach to adaptation. The agreement could reflect integration and mainstreaming of adaptation in national planning. It expressed interest in the development of metrics and said that enhancing the process of adaptation is not just a pre-Paris challenge and will extend to well beyond Paris (where the 2015 agreement is to be concluded at COP 21). It added however, that since the metrics would be so diverse, they should be set at the national level and not at the international level. It also called for sharing of experience and lessons learnt and for creating a forum on technical expertise on adaptation. It said that discussion on finance is a separate item, and that bilateral assistance provided could be considered for climate proofing.

Norway said that it is not in favour of an adaptation goal and like the EU, called for a dynamic approach to adaptation. It called for

strengthening institutions and encouraged dialogue and communication among Parties.

The **US** sees adaptation as a core element of the 2015 agreement. On the global goal, it said it is not clear how the goal will be applicable for Parties to implement. Support for adaptation should come from Parties with capacities to support adaptation and this is a requisite for a durable agreement, it said. The US also wanted to know how the registry would be operationalized.

Canada expressed that both developed and developing countries are suffering from climate change and spoke of mainstreaming adaptation. It said it is not convinced about a registry and that information can be reported through countries' national communications. It is also against any quantitative goal on adaptation. On financial support, it said that in fast start financing, adaptation was a priority and finance would be discussed separately. It also said that

the provision of adaptation support should be applicable to all and it should not differentiate between developed and developing countries.

Japan said it is difficult to set quantifiable targets for adaptation and the nature and role of adaptation is different from mitigation, implying the two should not be linked to each other.

Australia said that the 2015 agreement must recognize that adaptation is an important element and a country-driven process, which is a common responsibility of all Parties. Climate change can be tackled if major emitters take action, it said. It called for a COP decision to strengthen existing institutions and the need to share adaptation knowledge. The loss and damage mechanism cannot be part of the 2015 agreement, it said.