

Implementation of Paris Agreement must preserve balance on all issues, say developing countries

Bonn, 17 May (Hilary Chiew) – The first inter-sessional meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) after the adoption of the Paris Agreement at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris last year, opened here on 16 May.

H.E. Mr. Manasvi Srisodapol of Thailand, the Special Representative of the Chair of the Group of 77 and China on Climate Change, speaking for the Group said as Parties move into the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the delicate balance of all issues achieved in Paris as well as the principles and provisions of the Convention must be preserved.

The Bonn climate meeting will feature the 44th session of the Subsidiary Bodies of Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body of Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) as well as the first meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA). The meeting will end on 26 May.

In her welcoming address, the COP 21 Presidency (France), Madame Segolene Royal said that since the Paris Agreement was adopted, Parties are now more than negotiators.

“You are co-builders in this context of multilateralism. We now have the foundation and we now have to build the common home. You are going to define the rules and mechanisms that all of us will implement and transform our economies. We have no time to lose ... the world is waiting for us to implement this new Agreement ... in its entirety and not cherry-pick,” she stressed.

(Madame Royal, the French Minister of Environment, Energy and the Sea replaced Lawrence Fabius, the French Foreign Minister who presided over the Paris COP).

Out-going UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres was given a standing ovation in recognition of her tireless and outstanding work for the last five

years and presented with a gift from Madame Royal at the opening ceremony.

Figueres said “today marked a new era for all of us; your Paris Agreement has been hailed as a historic achievement.”

She said it is now time to move beyond theoretical concepts to the new reality of protecting the most vulnerable in every country, putting human beings in the centre of all development, decoupling economic and social growth from greenhouse gas emissions with developed nations taking the lead and in allowing developing countries to strengthen their economies without compromising their natural capital.

In-coming COP22 President, Mr Salaheddine Mezouar, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco said the hosting of COP22 is a reflection of Morocco’s continuous commitment towards the UNFCCC.

He said if COP21 is a COP of commitment, COP22 will be the COP of actions – to accelerate results and programmes, speeding up of the facilitation of the provision of finance and to prepare a roadmap to mobilise the US\$100 billion per year by 2020.

Thailand speaking for the G77-China also said that the Group expects developed countries to continue to take the lead role, particularly in implementing the Paris Agreement in accordance with their historical responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Reiterating the urgent need to enhance the pre-2020 ambition, including the ratification of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol which will provide a strong basis for post-2020 actions under the Paris Agreement, and the need to address the significant gap in the aggregate effects of country pledges and the aggregate emissions pathway consistent with holding temperature rise to well below 2C above pre-industrial and pursue efforts to limit temperature increase to 1.5C, the G77 said that “The focus now should be on

delivering major tasks to enhance the pre-2020 implementation including action on adaptation and loss and damage which are urgent priorities for developing countries”.

“We would like to underline that any deficiencies in fulfilling such commitment and closure of the emissions gap shall not be deferred to post-2020,” noting that while the Group remained committed to addressing climate change, its members were also most affected by the adverse impacts of climate change that are eroding the development gains and undermine the goals of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

“We are already taking ambitious measures in line with our capacity ... nonetheless, for our endeavours to be achieved, enhanced financial, technology and capacity building support must be provided to allow for effective action both in the pre-2020 and beyond,” added G77 and China.

It welcomed the reflections note for the Bonn talks by the COP 21 Presidency and the in-coming COP 22 Presidency and agreed that work programmes must move forward in a comprehensive, coherent and balance manner.

Due attention in both time allocation and facilitation support should be equally given to long-standing agenda items and the new mandate from Paris (venue of COP 21), the Group stressed.

It further welcomed the initiative of the COP Presidency to convene two special stocktaking events to ensure balance across the subsidiary bodies and among cross-cutting issues.

The Group also pointed out that the preparatory work at COP 22, in particular the facilitative dialogue to identify opportunity to enhance financial resources for technology development and transfer and capacity building, could benefit from early consultation on the modalities and scope at this session.

“To ensure balance and to stay true to the mandate, the Group would like to propose some concise surgical amendments to the agenda of the SBI, SBSTA and APA. We had submitted our amendment proposals and look forward to our suggestions being taken into account by the Chairs and Co-Chairs of the respective bodies,” said Thailand on behalf of G77 and China.

Representing the **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC)**, Jordan stressed that the group represents half of the world’s population and most of the world’s poor who are particularly vulnerable to and most adversely affected by climate change.

It acknowledged that after the decisions and the Agreement made in Paris, much more needs to be done to fully implement the Convention, including through its related legal instruments, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, so that we can combat climate change together successfully.

“As our work is under the Convention, and related legal instruments such as the Paris Agreement should strengthen the Convention’s implementation, the fundamental principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) remain the basis for our work together in combating climate change, achieving sustainable development, and ensuring the protection of Mother Earth.

“This will ensure that our work reflects and promotes the right to development of developing countries and the achievement of the sustainable development goals and aspirations of our peoples, with justice and equity,” it emphasized.

Jordan said in the work in the subsidiary bodies and in the APA at this session and in forthcoming meetings, the following five points will be crucial:

“First, the process and the progress of our work must be fair and balanced, with all issues to be treated with the same degree of importance and with progress to be achieved in a balanced manner. Transparency and inclusiveness are fundamental and crucial to having legitimate outcomes. This should include, in particular, the process of negotiations and consultations with Parties on the selection and appointment of individuals to serve in leadership posts within Convention bodies, including the UNFCCC Secretariat;

“Second, we expect to see all pre-2020 work concluded quickly, with the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol being ratified and entering into force and the full delivery of pre-2020 finance commitments from developed countries. This is essential in providing the context and foundation for the work we do for the post-2020 period. A weak pre-2020 result weakens post-2020 actions;

“Third, we expect to see equity and CBDR, through clear differentiation and flexibilities for developing countries, made operational in the work and outcomes of the APA and all the other Convention bodies under their mandates from COP 21. The great ambition that we have shown and continue to have as developing countries to address climate change through our actions should be matched by even greater ambition

from developed countries to show that they lead in reducing their emissions and in providing all the necessary support and means of implementation for developing countries to also do more under the Convention and its related legal instruments;

“Fourth, because finance and technology are crucial elements under the Convention that developed countries have long committed themselves to provide to developing countries, including now in relation to the implementation of the Convention and its Paris Agreement, the inadequacy or non-fulfillment of these obligations by developed countries creates great obstacles to the achievement of the sustainable development goals in the context of climate change. We expect that developed countries will now lead by example, both in undertaking serious and substantial emission reductions at home and in fulfilling their obligations to provide finance and technology to developing countries;

“Fifth, the various agenda of the APA and the subsidiary bodies and the work to be done under these may need to be recalibrated in the course of our work with a view to ensuring that they reflect the provisions and principles of the Convention and our agreements and understandings from Paris. These constitute a single package. We expect that the elements of mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, capacity building, transparency of action and support, and the facilitation of implementation and compliance, are addressed in a balanced, integrated, comprehensive, and mutually supportive manner, leading to progressively more effective common but differentiated ways of combating climate change by all Parties under the Convention and its related legal instruments, and a more just and fair world for all after 2020.”

Speaking on behalf of the **Least Developed Countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo** said it is highly encouraged by the political momentum of Paris and that most vulnerable countries are leading the way to put the Paris Agreement into action. The Group said the work did not end in Paris and there is need to move from mere negotiations to building and facilitating implementation of the Paris Agreement.

It expected the meeting in this session to focus on three areas:

“1. To initiate a timeline for certainty of entry into force – while the date is uncertain there is high possibility of this happening soon and Parties should

agree on work programmes based on decision 1/CP21 as soon as possible this year;

2. Strong coherence on negotiation issues across bodies;

3. Support for developing countries strategy to be on the agenda, in particular support for adaptation to act as catalyst.”

Mali speaking for the **African Group** said the African Head of States reiterated that the Paris Agreement is to implement the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) and further enhanced the multilateral rules-based regime in a balanced manner to achieve mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation. It stressed the urgency of fulfilling all commitments (in the pre-2020 period) to avoid carry-over of the implementation gap to 2020.

Representing the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**, **Maldives** listed a number of extreme climate events affecting members of AOSIS in recent times and stressed that the 1.5C temperature goal is a limit that must not be breached. It noted that, unfortunately, even if all Parties meet their intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs), the world will still be on track to warming of 1.5C. It appealed for rapid scaling up of climate actions.

Saudi Arabia representing the **Arab Group** stressed the importance of balanced treatment of all matters from the Paris Agreement and that failure in providing financial, technology and capacity building support by developed countries to developing countries to implement their nationally-determined contributions will negatively impact developing countries' abilities to deal with climate change, poverty eradication and achieving sustainable development.

India speaking for **BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China)** reiterated that equity and CBDR-RC continue to form the bedrock principles of the new Agreement as it has been embedded in the Convention.

As the SBI, SSTA and APA sessions will be deliberating on a number of issues related to the Paris Agreement, it hoped that all important issues under these bodies will receive balanced and holistic treatment and that Parties can amicably track progress across the subsidiary bodies and constituted bodies of the Convention.

India noted that the Paris Agreement recognizes the imperatives of sustainable patterns of consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead, and the importance of climate justice, in strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change.

“We have been consistent in our endeavour and efforts in tackling climate change, and emphasise that these represent far more ambitious efforts compared to our respective responsibilities and capabilities,” it stressed.

It further said pre-2020 actions are very important as they build trust amongst the Parties, thus the pending ratification by many Annex 1 Parties (developed countries) of the Doha Amendment which established the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, is a grave concern.

“We urge Annex 1 (Parties) to both ratify and revisit pledges of quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives and to close the emission gap. Raising pre-2020 ambition on other pillars of the Convention – adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building support – will pave the way for the implementation of the Paris Agreement,” it added.

On the transparency framework, the BASIC emphasised the importance of building on the existing framework under the Convention for effective implementation of the Paris Agreement and reiterated the importance of providing support and flexibility to developing countries, including through the capacity-building initiative for transparency.

Transparency of support, India said, is a fundamental aspect of the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the consideration of this issue should not be outsourced to other entities and the focus should be on the qualitative aspects of climate finance.

It urged developed countries to finalise and present the roadmap on fulfilling the financial commitment of the provision of US\$100 billion per year by 2020, noting that the role of public finance is crucial and urged developed countries to fulfil their pledges to the Green Climate Fund.

Colombia speaking for the **Independent Alliance of Latin American and the Caribbean (AILAC)** said adaptation together with means of implementation continue to be of utmost importance and must be given due attention in the preparation of the entry into force of the Paris Agreement. It echoed other

developing countries’ concerns on the importance of pre-2020 actions to close the emissions gap.

Representing the **Central American Integration System (SICA)**, **Honduras** said the focus of work should be on the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement. It said the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change showed that SICA countries are highly sensitive to climate change and therefore adaptation and mitigation must have the same priority, adding that developed countries need to step up efforts to enhance actions on climate change

The **European Union** said Parties are starting work here in Bonn on a solid, balance and ambitious global plan agreed in Paris to keep us on track to keep temperature rise below 2C and pursue curbing the rise at 1.5C. To maintain the spirit of Paris, Parties need to see progress of all aspects of the work programme, noting that in Europe, countries are adapting their policies to achieve the bloc’s 2030 target.

It said Parties must ensure that their INDCs are fully integrated into broader national planning and strategies and developed into bankable projects.

Australia speaking for the **Umbrella Group** congratulated the French Presidency’s role in delivering the Paris Agreement. Noting the proposed amendments by G77 and China in relation to the provisional agendas for the meetings of the three bodies in Bonn, it said “being consistent with the Paris Agreement is imperative”. It underscored the importance of mobilising private sector and markets to broaden and drive climate actions.

Switzerland, representing the **Environmental Integrity Group** said that while much work will address concrete technical issues, many also have political context to them, noting that developing deeper understanding of technical issues could help solve the political questions.

Following the opening ceremony, the SBSTA convened with the adoption of the provisional agenda with the amendments proposed by the G77 and China on one agenda item and proceeded to launch its work.

The SBI plenary commenced in the afternoon of 16 May and hit a snag over the adoption of the provisional agenda. (See TWN Bonn Climate Update 1: *Battle of interpretation over Paris Agreement begins.*)