

G77 says developed countries using process to reinterpret Paris Agreement

Bonn, 12 May (T Aji)- The G77 and China said that developed countries are intending to reinterpret the Paris Agreement (PA) by their stance in the negotiations at the Bonn climate talks.

At the contact group meeting of the UNFCCC's Ad Hoc Working Group on the PA (APA) convened on 11 May to take stock of negotiations on the various agenda items, the **G77 and China**, represented by **Ecuador**, complained of the imbalanced treatment of issues of importance to developing countries and that this was due to the intention of several developed countries to reinterpret the PA.

(Negotiations on the APA agenda items are being conducted through informal consultations by co-facilitators and work began on 9 May with meetings since then.)

At the contact group meeting, the co-facilitators reported on the progress of work on the various agenda items of the APA.

The G77 lamented that there had been un-equal treatment in terms of time allocation for certain elements within the agenda items, un-equal modalities undertaken by the different co-facilitators to guide the discussions, and also different ways or methodologies to begin to capture the outcomes of the discussion.

Recognizing that there is a challenge in terms of the organization of work and that some level of flexibility was needed according to the level of maturity of the different discussions, Ecuador said that "the real problem is when these differences of treatment in process or form, are nothing but the reflection, either as a cause or a consequence of the intention of several developed countries to reinterpret the PA," said Ecuador.

This it said was done by developed countries "not recognizing important aspects of differentiation,

the need for a balance between mitigation and adaptation, the linkages between action and means of implementation, the need for equal treatment between transparency of support and transparency of action, and by neglecting other important issues of developing countries," it said further in a strongly-worded statement.

Ecuador gave the example that the items related to mitigation were moving faster than items related to adaptation or means of implementation.

According to Ecuador, this can be clearly seen in the negotiations on making the Adaptation Fund serve the PA, in which the proposals of developing countries are being blocked by developed countries or being held hostage in relation to progress on other agenda items, (such as emissions trading and market mechanisms) which are taking place under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) dealing with Article 6 of the PA.

It also gave the example of Article 13 (Transparency Framework) where it said that in spite of progress in the textual negotiation on transparency of action, the same was not the case for transparency of support and that sufficient time had not been allotted to the issue.

Ecuador also said that for global stocktake (GST), the G77 was concerned that the co-facilitators' text comprised concepts that were grounded neither in the PA, nor in any reflection notes.

(During the informal consultations on the (GST), some Parties had raised objections to the manner in which new concepts had been brought forward but their concerns remained unaddressed.)

The G77 reminded Parties of the fundamental principles that it expected to be the basis of the negotiations.

These included the need for balance, between the

treatment of mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation throughout the different agenda items; the avoidance of any attempt of reinterpretation of the Convention and of the PA; the need for coherence and coordination within the APA agenda and with the agendas of the subsidiary bodies; the need to ensure a Party-driven process; and the need for differentiation between developed and developing countries as reflected in the Convention and in the PA.

Referring to pre-2020 climate action, Ecuador said that there was no item for the pre-2020 action agenda, “and in that regard we welcome the consultations being undertaken these past days on the 2018 Facilitative Dialogue, which we hope can help us to identify the urgent need to close gaps of adequate finance, technology and capacity-building support by developed to developing countries”.

Ecuador proposed the following measures to make progress in the remaining days of the negotiations:

- “All co-facilitators should use methods and approaches that take into account the principles that were mentioned before, as well as the limited capabilities of small delegations of many developing countries and conduct meetings that ensure the participation and inclusivity of all Parties;
- There should be some flexibility of the method of work, but with the only purpose of allowing discussions and textual negotiations that are lagging behind, in order to ensure balanced progress across all agenda items. The form and the process should be guided by the substance, and not the other way around;
- There should be balance on the approach, modalities and outcomes of all the agenda items, focusing on substance, procedural issues, showing differentiation and flexibility to developing countries, maintaining equal treatment and transparency;
- We need better synergy between the subsidiary bodies of the Convention. We welcome your meetings with the chairs of the other the other subsidiary bodies to enhance a more coherent work and we invite to share the outcomes of those coordination meetings with the rest of the Parties;
- There should be enhanced action on pre-2020 commitments, as well as on the provision and mobilization of financial resources, taking into account the respective capacities of developing

country Parties.”

Ecuador also said that it was open to further explore innovative ways to move forward, and welcomed the allocation of two-hour slots for items “as well as other proposals that serve the highest priority of ensuring a balanced progress in all agenda items”.

Iran spoke for the **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** and said that the agenda items in which mitigation-related issues were being discussed were being noticeably advanced faster while the agenda items dealing with adaptation, adaptation support, and the provision of the means of implementation from developed to developing countries were either stalled or being held back.

“Our partners are opposing differentiation between developed and developing countries, flexibility for developing countries, and the provision of the means of implementation to developing countries, in the implementation modalities that we are negotiating, despite what the PA and the Convention say. This is blocking us from moving forward smoothly,” said Iran.

“We hear much talk about an enhanced action agenda coming out of COP23 (the 23rd session of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties to be held in November this year) as a high level political outcome. For us, because of the urgency for climate action that we recognize, an enhanced action agenda lies in having enhanced pre-2020 action through the implementation of pre-2020 mitigation pledges under the Cancun Agreements, the ratification and entry into force of the Doha Amendment by the end of this year, and a clear roadmap for the provision by developed countries of the long-pledged USD100 billion a year by 2020. But we continue to sense reluctance, and even some backtracking, from some of our developed country partners in fulfilling these pre-2020 commitments and pledges. These are simply unacceptable,” said Iran.

It said that all the co-facilitators should use similar, consistent and coherent methods and approaches. They should recognize that many developing country delegations are very small and therefore a large number of formal and informal meetings should be avoided by the co-facilitators so as to avoid problems in terms of inclusivity and participation by Parties.

It also said that the co-facilitators should identify areas where there is consensus by the Parties while at the same time recognize divergence, particularly

in any materials that they produce to show to Parties during meetings.

It further said that the arrangement of the overall architecture or skeleton and the sub-headings were crucial to lay out a logical concrete outline for the draft negotiating text. "These should be based on inputs and consensus by all Parties, and where there is no consensus, different approaches and options should be reflected," said Iran.

Iran stressed that work on the agenda items relating to adaptation and the means of implementation should be advanced in the same pace and manner as work relating to mitigation.

"These are all linked such that the pace of progress in one element will affect progress in the other elements. Joint sessions by the APA and the subsidiary bodies on agenda items relating to the means of implementation should be held to discuss the linkages, avoid duplication, and identify the gaps of our existing work. The design and scheduling of formal and informal meetings on nationally determined contributions (NDCs), transparency, GST, and compliance issues should be arranged in a manner that would allow Parties to send their negotiators on finance, technology and capacity-building to these meetings," said Iran further.

Iran added that matters on adaptation, finance and response measures under the APA agenda item 8 should be urgently addressed.

"We want to see concrete progress on clarifying issues and illustrating a roadmap in this session with respect to the collective finance goal, the information on provision of finance support, and relevant institutional arrangements on finance. It will also help our progress for developed countries to unequivocally and clearly show how they will fulfill their pre-2020 commitments and pledges," said Iran.

Speaking for the **Arab Group, Saudi Arabia** said that there were fundamental differences in the mode of advancement in the APA agenda items and called on the Co-chairs to ensure that no one was left behind while advancing the technical work. It proposed that all APA agenda items must capture overarching considerations and guiding principles.

It expected equal time to be allocated to all themes within any APA agenda item, introduce flexibility to allow for list of speakers to be finished and most importantly ensure parallel advancement from the

political to the technical elements.

In relation to the informal notes of the discussions, it said that particular attention should be paid to the terms and language used as Parties are working on implementation of the PA and not on amending it by adding completely new concepts, said Saudi Arabia.

Maldives, for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** also called for balanced progress, the need to crystallize progress and move to text negotiations. It said that 60-minute sessions were too short and that the Co-chairs might consider giving Parties more time for discussions. It also said that some of the sessions could benefit from informal-informals. It called on the co-facilitators to produce some kind of reflections note where they would capture the headings of what would eventually form a decision in 2018. It called for the technical work to be expedited.

Ethiopia, for the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)**, called for joint sessions for the agenda items that were closely linked.

Guatemala, for the **Independent Alliance of the Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)** said that the session should remain focused on substance and the outcome should be a list of elements or headings to guide work for the future. It called for placeholders in text for issues that needed further discussion.

South Africa reiterated the importance of balanced discussions and said that Parties were well ahead in some items over others. "There has been no progress on transparency of support. Adaptation has met only once," it said and added that imbalances in discussions would only be counterproductive. South Africa also said that it remained concerned about the linkages with the related mandates of the constituted bodies.

The **European Union (EU)** said that what Parties were undertaking was a complex system with many moving parts and that the shared challenge was to move ahead and approach work logically in a balanced manner. It added that the Co-chairs' meeting with other negotiating groups had identified challenges and interlinkages. "We are sympathetic that not everything may be moving at the same speed but that is the natural dynamic of the process. We do not think some issues are moving very rapidly," said EU.

Speaking for the **Environment Integrity Group (EIG)**, **Switzerland** said that it was concerned

about the “little time” allocated to the issue of NDCs which had three sub-items (on features, information and accounting). It also called on the Co-chairs to have “balanced allocation and use of time”.

Australia spoke for the **Umbrella Group** and said that it welcomed progress of work in the informal consultations and that Parties were transitioning from political to technical work.

Responding to Parties, **Sarah Baashan (Saudi Arabia)** said the Co-chairs had noted all the issues raised by Parties and that they were looking at ways

to address the issues that were interlinked, and which would be communicated to the Parties. (**Jo Tyndall (New Zealand)** is the other APA Co-chair.)

Baashan also mentioned that the next contact group would be held on Saturday, 13 May which would provide Parties the opportunity to meet with the subsidiary bodies and other constituted bodies.

She asked of Parties to address linkages between the work of the various bodies in a holistic manner during the meeting.