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G77 and China calls for fair and equal treatment of issues

Durban, 30 Nov (Meena Raman) – The Group of 77 and China called for a fair and equal treatment of issues on the agenda of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWGLCA) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

This call was made by **Ambassador Silvia Merega of Argentina**, on behalf of G77 and China at the opening session of the AWGLCA held on 29 November in Durban.

Merega said that for a successful outcome in Durban, progress in the work must ensure even treatment of issues and decisive leadership was needed to ensure that all submissions coming from the Parties are discussed and the issues in the agenda are addressed meaningfully and receive a fair and equal treatment.

A serious imbalance in the progress of issues can clearly not be conducive to a successful outcome that is comprehensive and balanced, she added.

Merega said that in Durban, the G77 and China expected an outcome that is comprehensive and balanced, enabling the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention, pursuant to the results of the thirteenth and sixteenth sessions of the Conference of the Parties (referring to the Bali Action Plan and the Cancun decisions), addressing both implementation tasks and issues that are still to be concluded. Such a result must fully respect the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, the two-track negotiation as mandated by the Bali Roadmap, and rendering operational the Cancun decision.

She highlighted the importance of mitigation as part of a balanced and ambitious outcome in Durban. We recall that the appropriate treatment of the issue as determined in the Bali Roadmap demands a decision here in Durban, on the adoption, of the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and significant and ambitious efforts must be done in this regard. The second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol must be the basis for comparable Annex I emission reduction commitments of Non Kyoto Protocol Parties.

There was need to also address ways to enhance the mitigation ambition of Annex I commitments, as well as the tasks necessary to operationalize the Cancun decisions including the setting up of the registry for support for developing country mitigation actions.

New responsibilities as per Cancun decision, such as measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs), should be accompanied with clear indications on the amount and timing of financial resources that have to be provided to developing countries.

In Panama (the last meeting of the AWGLCA in October), the level of engagement in mitigation was positive, but insufficient in others. The G77 and China reiterated the need for balance, both within mitigation and between mitigation and other building blocks, including adaptation and financing.

Merega emphasized the importance of the issue of economic and social consequences of response measures for all developing countries, and therefore, the need to give full consideration under the AWG-LCA to what actions are necessary to meet the specific needs and concerns of developing countries arising from the impact of the implementation of response measures taken by developed country Parties. In this respect, the Group expected that developed countries engage constructively on this issue in order to have negotiating text to forward for adoption by the COP.

[In Panama, the informal group on economic and social consequences of response measures saw deep divisions over issues raised by a large number of developing countries especially on unilateral trade measures (UTMs). Developed countries were opposed to any texts for negotiations and did not even want the submissions of developing countries to be compiled into a document. Developed countries and Singapore insisted that the UNFCCC was not the proper forum to discuss UTMs but the WTO was the appropriate forum.]

On adaptation, the G77 and China strongly believed that the Cancun Adaptation Framework was one of the main achievements of Cancun in relation to the balanced treatment of mitigation and adaptation. Furthermore, the provisions included in the Adaptation Framework have been incorporated in order to have a coherent approach to adaptation under the Convention. In that sense, the establishment of the Adaptation Committee has been a priority to the Group. The Group welcomed the progress made to define the modalities, composition and procedures of the Committee, and looked forward its operationalization as soon as possible, keeping in mind the importance of creating the proper linkages to other institutional arrangements, in particular to the operating entities of the financial mechanism, as well as to others adaptation related arrangements that are being discussed under the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI).

On the composition of the governance body of the Adaptation Committee, Merega reiterated that it should have a majority of members representing countries of the G77 and China, taking into account that developing countries are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

On the very important issue of finance, the Standing Committee and long-term finance, the Group was ready to work on the draft negotiating texts to achieve concrete results. Merega said that it was clear that without financing, including for technology development and transfer and capacity building, the extent to which developing country Parties will be able to effectively implement their commitment under the Convention will be directly affected.

The Group believed that the role of the Standing Committee is of paramount importance and a decision must be adopted at this COP to fully perform its mandate to assist the COP in exercising its functions with respect to the financial mechanism of the Convention. The linkages between the Standing Committee and the COP as well as the functions of the Committee, in particular, the MRV of support provided to developing country Parties for the preparation and implementation of NAMAS and its reporting, among others, should further be explored and defined.

The G77 and China believed that the main source for long-term finance should be developed countries public funds, so as to ensure the adequacy and predictability of new and additional finance to meet mitigation and adaptation costs, and to redress the historical imbalance in financing for adaptation. Long-term finance should include the initial capitalization of the Green Climate Fund to become operational here in Durban. There was also a need to address the gap in financing for fast-track finance for the period which ends in 2012.

On the development and transfer of technologies, the G77 and China recognized the work done by the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) in its first and only meeting it had so far. In order to fully implement the Technology Mechanism established in Cancun, it was of utmost importance to define the governance structure of the mechanism; a structure where the TEC should serve as the linking body between the COP and the Climate Technology Center and Network (CTCN) to give coherence with other institutional arrangements under the Convention.

The Group expected the TEC to meet as often as necessary next year and have enough time and resources to develop and implement a program of work that fulfill its functions that were adopted by the COP in Cancun.

Other developing country groupings in supporting the position of the G77 and China expressed similar views.

Saudi Arabia for the **Arab Group**, said there was progress on the mitigation issues in Panama but not on the issue of economic and social consequences of response measures and stressed the need for balance in addressing all elements of the Bali Action Plan. On the form of the legal outcome of the AWGLCA process, it said that content will determine the legal form and not vice- versa.

Grenada, for the **Alliance of Small Island States** (**AOSIS)** stressed the need for increase in ambition on mitigation. It also called for a mandate for a parallel protocol which sits alongside the Kyoto Protocol (KP) for comparable mitigation actions of developed countries who are not KP Parties and for and actions by developing countries supported by finance and technology transfer.

The **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),** on behalf of the **Africa Group** said that the shared vision should be more than just a number and must reflect the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and historical responsibilities. The shared vision is not just about climate stabilization but has to also encompass the means of implementation. On mitigation of developed countries, it said that Cancun was weak on the comparability of efforts of developed countries and was silent on compliance and this needed to be addressed. The International Assessment and Review (IAR) process must be stronger than the KP compliance system and must be rigorous. The MRV regime must ensure comparability of efforts, avoid double counting and ensure environmental integrity.

On developing country mitigation, it said that the NAMAs are voluntary and can be amended according to change in national circumstances and the overarching priority of developing countries was poverty eradication. The implementation of NAMAs also depended on the availability of finance, technology transfer and capacity building.

On the issue of the review, the DRC said that it should be about a review of the implementation gaps to enable the full effective and sustained implementation of the Convention.

Gambia for the **Least Developed Countries** (**LDCs)** wanted the Durban outcome of the Bali Action Plan to be a legally binding instrument which sits next to the Kyoto Protocol. On the issue of long term finance, it said that there should be no gaps after the fast-start finance and there must be a robust work programme to define the timeline for the mobilization of the $100 billion.

Nicaragua speaking for **the Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of Our America (ALBA)** said that the current mitigation pledges of Annex 1 countries was insufficient and called for the loopholes to be closed. It said that the Green Climate Fund should not be an empty shell and proposed that it should have financial resources of at least 1.5% of the GDP of developed countries.

El Salvador, for the **SICA** countries (**Central American Integration System**) expressed concern that there has been slow disbursement of fast-start finance and that only a small proportion of the money was new and additional. It also called for greater transparency in this regard.

Papua New Guinea for the **Coalition of Rainforest countries** called for the Green Climate Fund to have a window for forest related activities as well as for new market mechanisms.

The **European Union** stressed the need for Durban to initiate a process for a new global framework that will level the playing field in relation to mitigation. Such a framework should be completed by 2015 so that it can come into force in 2020 and it needed this reassurance for it to undertake a second commitment period of emissions reductions under the KP. It also wanted an expansion of new market-based mechanisms.

Australia for the **Umbrella Group** and **South Korea** for the **Environmental Integrity Group** expressed similar views as the EU.

On the organization of work, Chair of the AWGLCA, Mr. Daniel Reifsnyder of the United States proposed that the substantive work would be resumed under a contact group which will have touch base sessions to have an overview of the work being undertaken in the various informal groups to deal with the issues and this was accepted by Parties.

Saudi Arabia raised the issue that the informal group on economic and social consequences of response measures had no negotiating text and said that it could not accept to move on other issues until there was a text by 30 November. It said that Parties were not negotiating in good faith as a text on this issue was being blocked.

In response, the Chair said that the issue was being discussed in multiple places as in the subsidiary bodies and he wanted the chairs of those bodies to report to the contact group on Thursday (1 December) on the progress made in this regard.

Saudi Arabia said that it could not accept that since the package under the AWGLCA had to be balanced on all the elements of the Bali Action Plan and every issue needed to be treated fairly and equitably as part of a comprehensive package.

The Chair said that in the informal group could use the submissions by Parties which are conference room papers as basis for the discussions.

Parties proceeded to meet in informal groups to advance further work.