

Leaders outline expectations for Durban

Durban, Dec 7 (Meena Raman) – Leaders at the opening session of the joint-high level segment of the 17th Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC and the 7th session of the Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (KP) outlined their expectations for the Durban outcome which took place on Tuesday, 6 December.

Several Heads of States from developing countries from Africa and the Small Island States who spoke at the opening segment, stressed the importance of the Kyoto Protocol and urged Annex 1 Parties to ensure emissions reductions under a second commitment period (2CP). They also stressed the importance of operationalising the Green Climate Fund and for its capitalization.

Many of them also emphasized the importance of operationalising the Adaptation Committee.

Present at the opening session was South African President, Mr. Jacob Zuma and UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon.

South African President Mr. Jacob Zuma outlined his expectations for the Durban outcome. He said that Durban is a decisive moment for the future of the multilateral rules-based regime, which has evolved over many years under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. The question that has been left unanswered from Bali is the 2CP for emissions reductions under the KP. This has now become dependent on the decision on the legal nature of the outcome of the negotiations under the Convention.

He said that it is also clear that if this question is not resolved, the outcome on other matters will become extremely difficult. In order to find a solution, Parties need to be re-assured that, should some of them commit to a 2CP in a legally binding manner, others would be ready to commit to a legally binding regime in the near future.

Zuma said that underlying this request for re-assurance is the insistence that all Parties will

implement the obligations and commitments previously undertaken, and that all will share the load to address the problem. Parties also need assurances that adequate and sustainable long term funding will be delivered, and that the implementation of all agreements will continue without an implementation gap occurring.

He called for Parties to make a decision here in Durban that includes both the now and future aspects of these re-assurances that are needed.

On the now and immediate, Zuma said that we need to agree on the adoption of a 2CP, as well as the possibility of enhanced mechanisms and to decide on the eligibility for participation in these enhanced mechanisms. Such an agreement should entail the adoption of an amendment of Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol with re-assurances that Parties will implement the amendment domestically by the end of 2012.

He added that Parties must also agree on the formalization and implementation of the mitigation pledges of developed countries and the rules of comparability between the pledges of those Parties of the Kyoto Protocol and those Parties outside the Kyoto Protocol. Therefore, the rules to assure comparability need to be finalized as soon as possible.

He called for an Agreement on adaptation, the establishment of the Green Climate Fund, finance, technology transfer and capacity building must also be part of the agreement in Durban.

For the future, Parties need to pronounce on the legal nature of the outcome of the future multilateral rules-based system. This should be done in a manner that would be equal in nature to those decided on the 2CP. In this future multilateral rules-based system, the level of ambition and the fact that all Parties will collectively have to do more, will have to be addressed.

He underscored the point that developed countries have the responsibility to take the lead in addressing the climate change challenge. And they must also lead through providing support to developing countries in their mitigation actions and efforts to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. This is consistent with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility enshrined in the international convention on climate change. It is common knowledge that developed countries benefitted from a high level of emissions for their own development.

It is therefore fair that developing countries be provided developmental space in a sustainable way so that they too may develop and eradicate the poverty that continues to afflict their people.

Zuma said that Parties must secure an enhanced multilateral rules-based response to climate change that is equally binding on all. Therefore, a process needs to be established for which the 2013-2015 review could provide valuable input. This process should also take into account what science prescribes, as well as the outcome of the 5th Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and other work that would have been done, under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and the Subsidiary Bodies.

He called on Parties to consider the type of process that will be required and a specific timeframe to conclude the work. The objective would be for the multilateral rules-based system, binding on all Parties, to be implemented by no later than 2020.

He said that the Adaptation Committee must be constituted. Its functions must be decided upon so that it can begin its work and play an important role in bringing into focus, in a coherent and holistic manner, what needs to be done as far as adaptation is concerned. The committee must bring an end to the current fragmented approach to adaptation. The link with the funding, technology transfer, mechanisms and networks and capacity building for real and tangible adaptation actions must be established. This will give effect to the agreement that equal priority must be given to adaptation and mitigation.

The South African President said that the Green Climate Fund (GCF) represents a centre piece for a broader set of outcomes for Durban. Developing countries demand a prompt start for the Fund through its early and initial capitalization. The early capitalization of the Fund and the issue of long term funding present a significant political challenge, given the current economic situation in many

developed countries which, of course, is fully appreciated.

Mr. Meles Zenawi, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia said that he was deeply disappointed that the transitional funding promised in Copenhagen has to a large extent failed to materialize. He called on Parties to approve the proposals for the GCF as is, and expressed worry that any wish to improve or modify the proposals could delay the establishment of the fund.

As regards the KP, he said that we could not come up with a better and more comprehensive deal by abandoning the only deal we have. He opposed attempts at backsliding by some Annex 1 countries. He welcomed the readiness of the EU to renew its commitments (to the 2CP) and was aware that this is a commitment in principle and has been conditioned on concessions from emerging nations. He hoped that wording could be found to bridge the gap between the two sides. It encouraged the EU not to abandon the KP, irrespective of whether the gap could be bridged or not. Keeping the KP alive until we have something better is too important for the credibility of the whole process to be sacrificed for tactical advantages at the negotiating table.

UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon laid out his expectations. He called on Parties to implement on what was agreed to in Cancun. There was need to ensure that the Adaptation Framework and its Committee and the Technology Mechanism and its Climate Technology Centre and Network are ready to start work as soon as possible. There is need for tangible progress on short and long-term financing. On long-term financing, we need to mobilize \$100 per annum by 2020 from governmental, private sector and innovative new sources. The Green Climate Fund must be launched in Durban and appealed to industrialized countries to inject initial capital to allow the fund to begin its work immediately.

On the future of the KP, Ban said that in the absence of a global binding climate agreement, it was the closest we have. While Kyoto alone will not solve today's climate problem, it is a foundation to build on with important institutions. It provides the framework that markets sorely need. Carbon pricing, carbon trading depend on a rules-based system. He urged Parties to carefully consider a 2CP. He called on Parties not to forsake the collective vision for a comprehensive, binding climate change agreement that is both effective and fair for all and for Durban to take concrete steps towards a more robust climate regime.

Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, the President of Gabon said that Africa, the cradle of humanity, must not be remembered as the cemetery to the hopes of people of the world waiting for solutions for a healthy planet. Actions need to be concrete, fair, generous and effective. They should be anchored in a new commitment period in which all shoulder the burden that is proportional to our national circumstances. Some have historic responsibility and some have the capacity to act, while others, particularly the peoples of the Sahel in Africa and Small Island States are innocent victims of climate change.

The Prime Minister of the Central African Republic stressed the importance of following the Bali Roadmap. He said that the KP is a cornerstone for the climate regime and the 2CP was crucial for the Durban outcome. He said the developed countries must accept their historical responsibilities and take ambitious and robust mitigation actions in line with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities. Developing countries should be supported and enabled to undertake nationally appropriate mitigation actions. The Green Climate Fund should be operationalised with funding. He also called for funding for forest-related activities and for the operationalisation of the Adaptation Committee and ensuring linkage to the financial mechanism and the Technology Mechanism. In relation to technology transfer, he said a solution must be found on the issue of intellectual property rights.

The Prime Minister of Senegal, Mr. Souleymane Ndene Ndiaye expressed similar views as the Prime Minister of the Central African Republic.

Ms. Connie Hedegaard, the European Commissioner for Climate Change said that Parties need to deliver on what was agreed in Cancun and decide on further progress. She called for progress on the gap between 2 degree C ambition and the current pledges; progress on transparency and finance and most importantly, the need to decide on the way forward to a new comprehensive legally binding global agreement.

Referring to the Convention and the KP, she said that they were crafted in the 20th century and a future regime needs to reflect the reality of the new century, and the reality that the countries that were industrialized countries back in 1992 account for a rapidly decreasing share of emissions. Therefore, in order to tackle effectively the challenge of the 21st century, all major economies need to commit. She said that Europe understood that some are not ready now, and the EU has put a significant offer on the table. Even if others are not ready to take a 2CP, the EU was ready to do this but it must be reassured that others will join us in a new legally binding framework after the 2CP and when they will. This is why it insisted on an agreement to a roadmap for future action from all other parties.

Mr. Marcin Korolec, the Polish Minister of Environment speaking for the EU referred to the roadmap and said that it was not meant to change the Convention. He said that there was need to build on what we have achieved thus far: the Kyoto Protocol, Bali, Cancun and the dynamic principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Mr. Sprent Dabwido, the President of the Republic of Nauru, speaking for the Pacific Small Island Developing States said that negotiations must be refocused on mitigation to begin a process to ratchet up the ambition of efforts to reduce GHG emissions to a level that ensures the viability and survival of all nations.

There was also need to have a 2CP with an enhanced set of rules to strengthen its environmental integrity. He called for a Durban Mandate for a new legally binding protocol to complement Kyoto, with binding mitigation commitments for non-Kyoto Parties and mitigation actions for developing countries as well as the conclusion of all other elements of the Bali Action Plan. Work must also be completed on the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Committee and the work program on loss and damage.

The Prime Minister of Samoa echoed the views of the President of Nauru.