

Guidance for Intended Nationally Determined Contributions Criticised by Developing Countries

Geneva, 10 February (Hilary Chiew) – At the briefing session on support for Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) held on 9 February on the sideline of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP), several developing countries questioned the lack of attention given to adaptation and the mitigation-centric nature of the guidance for preparation of INDGs.

The two-hour briefing session saw presentations of various initiatives to help countries prepare and put forward their INDGs, notably from the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Climate Change Alliance, France and Germany. Two developing countries – Saudi Arabia and Mexico – were also invited to make presentations on their respective INDG preparation.

Voicing its strong concerns about the guidance materials prepared by the UNFCCC's secretariat, **China** expressed surprise over the INDGs submission portal, noting that any guidance for INDGs should be endorsed by the Conference of Parties (COP). Referring to the mitigation-centric materials, it said the secretariat should not provide any misleading materials and requested those materials to be deleted as they were not discussed by the Parties.

China said that as noted by other developing countries, INDGs is a very sensitive issue and it is not just about mitigation. It would like to see developed countries and other UN agencies and organisations spend more energy and money in helping developing countries to prepare other aspects of the 2015 agreement.

Quoting paragraph 2(d) of the Warsaw decision, it reminded developed country Parties, the operating entities of the financial mechanism and any other organisations in a position to do so to

provide support for the related activities referred to in sub-paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) as early as possible in 2014.

China further pointed out that sub-paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) were not only referring to developing countries. Therefore, such initiatives should also help developed countries to prepare their INDGs so that they can produce ambitious INDGs in terms of financial and technology transfer.

[Paragraph 2(b) reads: *To invite all Parties to initiate or intensify domestic preparations for their intended nationally determined contributions, without prejudice to the legal nature of the contributions, in the context of adopting a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2 and to communicate them well in advance of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (by the first quarter of 2015 by those Parties ready to do so) in a manner that facilitates the clarity, transparency and understanding of the intended contributions, without prejudice to the legal nature of the contributions;*

Paragraph 2(c) reads: *To request the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action to identify, by the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties, the information that Parties will provide when putting forward their contributions, without prejudice to the legal nature of the contributions, referred to in paragraph 2(b) above; ...]*

Egypt reminded Parties of the delicate outcome in Lima (see background information below) and warned against facing the same political dilemma of balancing the treatment of mitigation and adaptation. It strongly asked that adaptation be treated equally as mitigation. It also said financial

support alone is insufficient and that it would welcome assistance on the technical level in preparing its INDC.

In supporting China, **Argentina** said it is important to stress that INDCs are to be nationally-determined and all elements must be addressed in a balanced manner.

Saudi Arabia in its presentation said at the regional level, Arab nations were unhappy that support was only for mitigation and they want to see a process that will really help countries to prepare their INDCs in a manner that will not prejudice the outcome in Paris. At the national level, it said the process is on-going but the targets for the four sectors are difficult and challenging.

Iran said developing countries' perspective on INDCs is that all elements of the Convention should be addressed in a balanced manner and wondered how the UNDP is going to provide finance and technical support to all developing countries.

Timor Leste said the guidance to be developed by the UNDP and others would need to consider paragraph 11 of the Lima decision, noting that the guidance needs to be based on national circumstances.

'It means do not push us for our quantified INDCs as we (as least developed countries) can only do low greenhouse gas emission. It is not possible for Timor Leste to quantify our emissions. The methodologies should be flexible and should include adaptation needs as per paragraph 12 (of the Lima decision),' Timor Leste stressed.

[Paragraph 11 reads: *Also agrees that the least developed countries and small island developing States may communicate information on strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emission*

development reflecting their special circumstances in the context of intended nationally determined contributions;

Paragraph 12 reads: *Invites all Parties to consider communicating their undertakings in adaptation planning or consider including an adaptation component in their intended nationally determined contributions; ...]*

In its presentation and subsequent response to Parties' interventions, the UNDP asserted that a chapter on how to consider adaptation in the preparation of INDCs is currently being developed in response to the Lima decision. The chapter will be distributed for comments to all countries by the end of March and integrated in the INDC guide by the end of April.

The UNDP said it will publish the guidance that is under development with the World Resources Institute and the UNFCCC at the end of March as a request from participants at its regional technical dialogues, and that the guidance has gone through an extensive comment period where it was reviewed by dozens of countries and non-governmental organisations.

At the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties in Lima last December, the dilution of adaptation actions became a contentious issue. Developing countries were united in their demand that adaptation has to be part of the 2015 agreement and fought for insertion of adaptation in the Lima decision text. In the earlier drafts, there was no provision that referred to strengthening of adaptation action in the new agreement. This was a major concern of developing countries which saw the developed countries pushing for a mitigation-centric agreement, with the issues of adaptation and means of implementation being marginalised or omitted.