

ADP: Developing countries demand Party-driven text-based negotiations

Lima, 3 Dec (Meena Raman) – Many developing countries and their groupings demanded a more transparent and participatory method of negotiations than the one currently practiced by the Co-chairs, during the first negotiating session of the Durban Platform Working Group at the Lima COP on Tuesday, 2 December.

Their demands that the traditional method of work of putting texts on a screen, and making changes to the text as countries made their proposals, reached new heights as the countries perceived that the Co-chairs were less than interested in accepting their proposals.

Instead, the Co-chairs of the Ad Hoc Working on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) seemed intent on continuing what they had done in the previous year, viz. to merely listen to comments and proposals made by the Parties and then for them to come out with new versions of the draft decision text. This was considered to be not a Party-driven but a chair-driven process by many of the developing countries.

The ADP formal plenary session began on Tuesday morning, with the ADP Co-chair Kishan Kumarsingh (Trinidad and Tobago) presiding, along with the other Co-chair, Artur Runge-Metzger (the European Union). The Party groupings made their views heard on their expectations for Lima under the ADP, with many of the developing country groupings stressing the need for changes in the mode of work from previous sessions in order for Parties to directly engage in text-based negotiations with each other.

To assist Parties in Lima, the ADP Co-chairs had prepared a ‘non-paper’ on elements for a draft negotiating text for the 2015 Paris agreement

(which is to come into effect post-2020) and a draft decision text on advancing the Durban Platform. This draft decision text includes matters regarding the Paris agreement, the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) for that agreement, as well as the pre-2020 climate actions.

In the afternoon of Tuesday, Parties met in a contact group setting to first discuss the draft decision text and then proceeded to meet in two parallel sessions to consider the elements on ‘adaptation’ and ‘finance’ in relation to the Paris agreement contained in the non-paper.

Given that there were many countries still remaining that wanted to take the floor when the parallel sessions ended, the ADP will to continue consideration of these elements when they meet again on Wednesday 3 December, in addition to the ‘mitigation’ element, as well as the draft decision text.

Contact group discussion on the draft decision text

The contact group on the draft decision text was facilitated by Runge-Metzger, who invited Parties to consider paragraphs 1-3 of the text in the non-paper, relating to the Paris agreement. He called on Parties to speak to the specific paragraphs and indicate how to improve the texts and “negotiate with each other and not with the Co-chairs”.

Malaysia, speaking for the **G77 and China** said that the Group had called for text-based negotiations. Responding to the Runge-Metzger, it wanted clarification on how the comments and views of Parties were going to be captured and how the improved text will be constructed.

To this, the Co-chair responded that when Parties make suggestions on the text, the secretariat will capture suggestions and on that basis, Parties' views will be reflected in "improved texts". If there are objections to proposals, Parties can also respond to that on how to "fix it".

Some Parties then began to make proposals on textual changes in relation to paragraphs 1-3 of the draft decision text, while others expressed concerns over the mode of work and wanted the texts and changes proposed to be reflected on the screen, so that Parties could react to the proposals made.

Algeria, for the **Arab Group** called for texts on the screen and for proposed changes by Parties to also be reflected.

Echoing similar concerns, **China** said that the approach for the past one year has not been real negotiations and added that it was concerned by the Co-chair's proposal that the "secretariat takes notes" of the proposals by Parties and "take it back home to cook in your kitchen". It supported the Arab Group and called for a "common construction of texts on the screen". China also wanted to clarify that it "cannot be taken for granted that the revised decision text would be the basis of textual negotiations," as there were also conference room papers which had been submitted (by Parties) which have not been captured in the draft decision text. It said to the Co-chair that "your text is your text and not an outcome of a Party-driven process."

Saudi Arabia, speaking for the **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** agreed with Algeria and China on the process and said that the text was "unbalanced and needs to be balanced". **Iran** supported the LMDC views and called for reflection of texts on the screen so that all Parties can understand what is happening and stressed the importance of transparency in the process.

Sudan for the **African Group** said that since some Parties were making proposals for textual changes, it wanted to see the texts on the screen.

In response to this, Runge-Metzger said that "we will get to that stage." **Sudan** then said that it

wanted an assurance that Parties' proposals will be reflected on the screen.

China then took the floor again in support of the African Group to say that there have been no objections from anyone to have the texts on the screen and wanted the specific proposals made by Parties to be seen so that Parties can react to them.

It also expressed concern that no reactions to the proposals may be viewed as acceptance by silence. It sought clarity on whether the Co-chairs are going to present texts on the screen, reflecting the proposals of all Parties.

In response, Runge-Metzger said that "we will not misconstrue areas where we cannot see convergence or consensus. This is not the last time to go through the text. We are choosing this methodology of work for the next 4 days so that it is clear where the sticky points could be and then the text can come to the screen", and "we can go chunk by chunk." He was concerned that if the process starts with texts on the screen, Parties may be stuck on one paragraph and may not know how to deal with other paragraphs below. He said that there Parties need to go through the entire text to give views on the different parts.

Nicaragua supported the call for texts on the screen through focused negotiating groups to "narrow differences and find consensus". It added that if the agreement is to be applicable to all, it must be acceptable to all through negotiations and not intermediation.

Jordan supported the views of Algeria and Saudi Arabia. **Venezuela** said that the draft decision prepared by the Co-chairs reflects the Co-chairs' understanding of proposals by Parties. It also wanted to see texts on the screen.

Runge-Metzger in response said that if Parties did not like the Co-chair's text, they could "throw it away".

Pakistan supported the views of China and wanted a "common construction of the text for transparency", adding that "there are precedents" for this approach.

Egypt asked if there were technical issues for not having texts on the screen.