



Climate talks open in Marrakech, Morocco

Marrakech, 8 Nov (Zhu Zhenyan and Meena Raman) – The 22nd session of the Conference of Parties (COP 22) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 12th session of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 12) kicked off on 7 November, just 3 days after the entry into force of the Paris Agreement (PA).

It began with an opening ceremony with the French Foreign Minister, Ségolène Royal, the COP21/CMP11 President, appreciating that 100 countries have already ratified the PA and heralding this “as a historic moment in the history of humanity.” She said Parties had a solid foundation to increase the strategy needed to build a low carbon and climate resilient society and to limit temperature rise to below 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels.

Following Royal, Salaheddine Mezouar, the Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs who was elected as COP 22/CMP 12 President, addressed the plenary. He said the rapid ratification of the PA is an unrivaled progress and called on Parties to be more ambitious in their commitments. He said that there was a groundswell of momentum building around the world and acknowledged the fact that PA does not yet put the world on track towards the goal of limiting the global average temperature rise to 1.5 to 2 degrees C, as agreed by the international community in Paris last year.

Together with Royal, the COP 22 President handed out solar lanterns to all delegates in the room, as a symbol of the transformation to clean technology. The delegates then held up the lights in a show of solidarity.

Patricia Espinosa, the new Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC in her address to the opening plenary of COP 22 highlighted a few key points. She said that “finance is flowing but we know it is not enough. It has to reach the level and have

the predictability needed to catalyze low-emission and climate-resilient development; nationally determined contributions (NDC) now need to be integrated into national policies and investment plans; support for adaptation needs to be given higher priority, and progress on the loss and damage mechanism has to be ensured to safeguard development gains in the most vulnerable communities.”

She also added that “we have to address the capacity building needs of developing countries in a manner that is both tailored and specific to their needs; and non-Party stakeholders, from the North and from the South, need to be fully engaged as they are central to the global action agenda for transformative change.”

Hoesung Lee, the Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in his statement said COP 22 is to be the COP of action and highlighted the IPCC’s action-packed work programme which he stressed contributes to the implementation of the PA, which was firmly based on the scientific findings of IPCC assessments.

Lee said that a year ago COP 21 invited the IPCC to produce a special report on the impacts of warming of 1.5 C above pre-industrial levels and related emission pathways. He said that last month, the IPCC approved the outline of *Global Warming of 1.5 C* and is seeking nomination of authors for this report. Lee emphasized that IPCC wants the authors’ team to be truly representative. He urged delegates to encourage their governments to nominate experts from all relevant disciplines for this assessment.

He added that last month’s IPCC session also approved the outlines of the *2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*. This update of methodologies will provide a sound scientific basis for future

international climate action under the PA, he said further.

He added that the IPCC will produce two other special reports in 2019, and the 6th Assessment Report itself, whose synthesis report will be completed in 2022, in time for the first global stocktake the following year under the PA.

Lee said the IPCC is also considering how to align future assessments with the stocktake, for instance by moving to five-yearly intervals. He looked forward to hearing Parties' views during the discussion in the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) this week on how IPCC assessments can inform the stocktake.

He further said that it is also our ambition to enhance the involvement of scientists from developing countries in our work. This will enhance the scientific assessment of regional aspects of climate change issues, which is vital to policymakers' informed decisions.

Following the opening ceremony, Parties were invited to adopt the provisional agenda of the COP.

Turkey had made a proposal to amend the provisional agenda by requesting to add a sub-item 19 (a) that is as follows: "access to support from the Green Climate Fund and the Climate Technology Center and Network under the PA by Parties whose special circumstances are recognized by the COP."

(During the closing plenary of COP 21 in Paris, Turkey had underlined its expectation that the

issue of its special circumstances would be resolved during the term of the French Presidency of the COP. In this context, extensive consultations have been convened by the Presidency with Parties on the special circumstances of Turkey. The country is a UNFCCC Annex 1 Party; this annex includes developed countries that are not eligible for financial support under the Convention.)

Several Parties from the floor proposed that the COP 22 President conduct informal consultations to find a way forward for Turkey but did not support the amendment to the provisional agenda.

In view of this, the COP 22 President suspended the meeting for a brief time to conduct consultations among Parties.

When the COP resumed, the plenary adopted the provisional agenda without including Turkey's proposed sub-item but with the understanding that this matter will be addressed under "other matters" of the agenda and that consultations on the issue would continue.

Following this, the COP President proceeded to set out how the work on the various agenda items will take place.

This was followed by the convening of the plenary of CMP 12, which adopted the provisional agenda and proceeded to organize its work.

The first meeting of the plenary of COP 22 and CMP 12 did not hear the statements of Parties.