

Continuity of Kyoto Protocol key for developed country mitigation

Panama City, 3 October (Meena Raman) – Developing countries stressed the importance of ensuring the continuity of the Kyoto Protocol (KP) and emphasized the importance of ensuring the comparability of efforts among developed countries as regards their mitigation commitments in negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Developing countries led by Brazil and supported by Mali for the African Group, St. Lucia for the Alliance of Small Island States, China, India and Venezuela expressed these views on October 2 in Panama City, at the climate negotiations under the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA).

In the informal group on mitigation commitment or actions of developed countries, Brazil said that it would be a mistake to engage in the technical items in the discussion without having the political dimension as the technical approach cannot be a way to park the political discussion on the continuity of the KP.

(Developed countries such as Japan, Russia and Canada have declared in the KP working group that they will not commit to a second commitment period under the Protocol, while the European Union and other developed countries including Australia, Norway, New Zealand and Switzerland have pre-conditioned their willingness to consider such commitments upon the emergence of a new mitigation regime that includes all “major emitters”, including the United States who is not a party to the Protocol and “advanced developing countries.” Developing countries have expressed concern that developed countries are planning to “jump ship” and “escape” their Kyoto commitments to a new mitigation regime under the Convention).

Since the opening plenary and contact group meetings of the two working groups under the UNFCCC and the KP on Saturday, 1 October, Parties have been in informal and spin-off groups to conduct negotiations. The KP spin-off groups have been closed to observers, while the first meetings of the informal groups under have been open to observers.

The informal group on the mitigation commitments or actions of developed country Parties met in the morning of 3 October and was followed by the mitigation actions of developing countries in the afternoon. The sessions were co-facilitated by Mr. Jose Garibaldi Fernandez of Peru and Ms. Karine Hertzberg of Norway.

International Assessment and Review

One issue under discussion is that of international assessment and review (IAR) of emissions and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases related to quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets of developed countries. The Cancun decision agreed to establish the IAR process and to develop the modalities and procedures.

Fernandez, who co-facilitated the session suggested that Parties address the following: define objective, scope and principles of the IAR; relation of the IAR to the ‘review’ which is being under considered under the “shared vision’, international consultations and analysis (ICA) relating to developing countries mitigation actions, and existing review process under the Convention; list of possible elements of inputs and outputs of the IAR process; procedures for the IAR process and further consideration of outcomes of IAR.

Brazil said that on the objectives, scope and principles, one idea that many countries had expressed was the objective of enhancing the comparability of efforts among developing countries as part of the IAR. On the scope, Brazil said that consideration of a wide variety of information of the IAR was a strong point. Another important aspect in enhancing the comparability of efforts was the establishing of common accounting rules.

Brazil said that one item to highlight was the need to address compliance (in meeting emission reduction targets). It said that it was important to build on the review process for developed countries that exists today. It also stressed the need to have a clear distinction between the IAR and the ICA process, which are distinct processes and expressed doubts about any relationship between the two processes.

Brazil said that the IAR element becomes more relevant as some developed countries are choosing to present their mitigation actions no longer in the context of the Kyoto Protocol. Establishing compliance through the IAR becomes more and more relevant, said Brazil. The output of the IAR and the report has to address compliance in the review process as in the KP, including the need to do possible adjustments and corrections.

Brazil said that options being considered (in relation to the development of texts for a decision) must reflect the comparability of efforts with the KP. It would be a mistake to engage in the technical items in the discussion without the political dimension, as the technical approach cannot be a way to park the political discussion on the continuity of the Kyoto Protocol. The IAR must be based on the continuity of the KP and is compatible with the Article 8 review in the KP. It stressed that the KP reference offers the basis for the IAR and significant time would be lost to re-invent matters that have been identified in the KP through many decisions of the Parties.

India and **Venezuela** in echoing the sentiments of Brazil also emphasized the distinct nature of the IAR and the ICA. India said that it was not comfortable in having any “parallelism” between the two processes. Venezuela was not comfortable in giving the co-facilitators the mandate to prepare any non-paper on the matters under discussion if there was no certainty that the options to be reflected in the non-paper reflect the continuation of the KP.

The **United States** in response said that Parties were not operating under the KP system and regardless of the KP, they were “moving under the UNFCCC and the Cancun agreement is the basis forward.”

The European Union and Norway echoed the views of Brazil in relation to the lack of need for duplication of the review processes, which currently exist.

Upon conclusion of the discussion on the IAR, the co-facilitators said that they will prepare a non-paper to advance further work.

Biennial reports

The discussion on biennial reports of developed countries was facilitated by Ms. Helen Plume of New Zealand and was focused on the objective purpose, scope and principles of biennial reports; relation of the biennial reports to the existing reports by Annex 1 Parties such as national communications and national GHG inventories.

Brazil said that the Cancun decision refers to the consideration of biennial reports as part of the general

revision of the current guidelines for the preparation of national communications of Annex 1 Parties. It stressed the importance of the revision of the guidelines including the need to address issues such as common accounting rules.

On elements to include in the biennial reports, Brazil suggested reference to policies and measures and issues related to the provision of financing through common reporting formats. On the application of common accounting rules, it underlined the need for information on effects of implemented commitments and on the achievement of targets and the total effects of the measures is important. On the national inventories, it said that it was relevant to have additional information on the GHG inventories through the biennial reports.

Mali, speaking for the **African Group** said that the objective of the biennial reports is ascertain progress in the performance of the commitments of developed countries. In this regard, progress as regards the provision of financial resources to development countries is also very key.

South Africa agreed with **Mali** and **Brazil** that supplementary information from developed countries was important in relation to the achievement of the quantified economy-wide reductions target.

India and **Singapore** supported Brazil, Mali and South Africa. India stressed that the biennial reports are linked to the IAR.

Lebanon said that biennial reports must relate to the ambition level of the developed countries and the progress they have achieved on low-carbon development strategies and targets.

The **US** said that there was a good degree of commonality among Parties and that it made sense to look at the targets, the summary of the effects, the accounting rules and the enhancing of the provision of support.

The **EU** said that the biennial reports were important for the IAR process and there was need for common accounting rules.

The co-facilitators will provide a non-paper synthesizing the views of Parties.

In the organization of the work of the informal group, developing countries including Brazil and the Alliance of Small Island States and the European Union stressed the importance of having in-depth discussions on the issue of the scaling up of the level of ambition of developed countries of their economy-wide emissions reductions target.