

Developing countries forge new alliance to save climate regime

Geneva, 10 October (Meena Raman) –The African Group, the Least Developed Countries and the ALBA group of countries launched an alliance in Panama City on the side-lines of the climate talks to “save the climate regime and ensure success in Durban” at the forthcoming meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

At a joint-press conference held on the 7 October, news of the alliance was announced. The African Group, a grouping of 53 African countries was represented by Mr. Tosi Mpanu Mpanu of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the LDC Group comprised of 48 countries was represented by Mr. Pa Ousman Jarju of Gambia and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Americas (the ALBA Group) comprised of 8 countries was represented by Venezuela’s climate envoy, Ms. Claudia Salerno Caldera.

Mr. Mpanu Mpanu said that the groups had come together to enshrine their unity in making Durban a successful COP and to address the core issues that united the groups.

Ms. Caldera said that their unity was for achieving a common goal to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention in saving humankind, the planet and mother earth. She said that the groups came together in response to the Panama climate change meetings and to ensure progress in the negotiations in good faith.

Mr. Ousman Jarju of Gambia referred to the ‘Statement of Common Position’ adopted by the 3 groups and highlighted some specific aspects. He said that cooperation was necessary for Durban to strengthen a science-based and fair outcome for the climate regime and reiterated that the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol

constituted the fundamental global legal framework on climate change.

He said that the negotiations must produce two outcomes in Durban in line with the Bali Roadmap, for an agreed outcome to implement the Convention and a second and subsequent period of the Kyoto Protocol. These outcomes must be ambitious, balanced and based on science, equity and the rule of law. All actions or measures related to climate change must be in full conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular those of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. He said that it is imperative that developing countries work in unison to advance a strong common position to ensure the realization of the shared objectives and for the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol.

On the state of play of the negotiations, Mpanu said that two major gaps had to be addressed in relation to mitigation and finance. On the mitigation gap, he said that there was need to decrease emissions by 12 gigatonnes CO₂ equivalent by 2020, if the temperature is to stabilise at 2 degree C. Developing countries are contributing to a reduction of about 5 gigatonnes while developed countries to only a 4 gigatonne reduction, showing that developing countries were doing quite a lot.

On the finance gap, he said that developed countries had promised fast start financing (of USD30 billion between 2010 to 2012) but this has not been fast nor has it started. On long-term finance, the USD 100 billion per year by 2020 as agreed to in Cancun was just the floor as a lot more was needed, including for adaptation. There is need to know what will happen between

2013 and 2020, he added. He also stressed the need for a decision under the Kyoto Protocol for a second commitment period and that Durban must not become the graveyard for the Kyoto Protocol.

Mpanu also expressed concerns that the negotiations in Panama advanced on the issue of mitigation but there has been no progress on finance. It was important to adopt an agreement in Durban and that there was no need for standing ovations but for developed countries to show good faith and leadership in the negotiations, he said further.

On the negotiations in Panama, Ousman Jarju said that at the beginning of the week, there was foot-dragging on the part of developed countries in relation to the finance issue, but the G77 and China was able to send the right signals to ensure that there were negotiating texts on the table. He reiterated that without a commitment by Annex 1 Parties to a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol in Durban, it will be hard for progress under the Convention and he hoped developed countries realized the implications of their position in this regard.