

Delegates under pressure as negotiations reach frenzy mode

Paris, 2 December (Meena Raman and T. Ajit) — Negotiations to reach a deal on the Paris agreement is in a frenzy mode, as delegates are under intense pressure to conclude their work by the evening of Thursday, 3 December, to arrive at a revised version of the draft negotiating text, which is to be considered by Parties on Friday, 4 December.

The negotiations are taking place under the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) which is packed with several meetings under the contact group, spin-off groups and informal-informal sessions where Parties are engaged in serious negotiations, drafting texts, bridging proposals and narrowing down options that are contained in the current draft text.

Parties have started working till late into the night to arrive at a negotiating text with clearer options for their ministers to consider in the second week of the talks.

Developing country delegations raised concerns to the ADP Co-chairs, Daniel Reifsnyder (USA) and Ahmed Djoghlaif (Algeria) on Tuesday and Wednesday at the meeting of the contact group about the difficulties they faced, especially by smaller delegations who are unable to cope with the various meetings.

Cuba, reflecting the sentiments of many developing countries at the meeting of the ADP contact group on Wednesday morning, said that its small delegation could not cope with multiple meetings and described the situation as “chaotic”. It expressed doubts if any successful outcome can be achieved through a “chaotic process” and called for “corrective measures”.

Reifsnyder, in response said that similar concerns had been expressed from a number of delegations but that Parties are at a difficult time where the work of the ADP must finish by Friday. He added that progress in

the spin-offs and informals has been slow with Parties not reaching compromises.

South Africa, speaking for the **G77 and China**, had on Tuesday, raised concerns about the scheduling of meetings and about the number of spin-offs being conducted. It wanted the sensitivities of Parties to be taken into account. It also called for cross-cutting issues to be dealt with in the contact group and for the spin-offs to be time-bound.

The ADP contact group will also meet on Wednesday evening (2 December), and Reifsnyder informed Parties that the President of the 21st meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 21) to the UNFCCC, Laurent Fabius, will be present to assess where Parties are at this juncture of the negotiations.

The spin-offs and informal-informal sessions were closed to observers and convened till late into the night. On the issue of observer participation in the spin-off groups, **Malaysia** for the **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** raised the issue with the Co-Chairs during the contact group. “There is no spill over room for the NGOs for the spin-off groups. They play an invaluable role in terms of their timely support, especially to developing countries. We can have bigger rooms for spin-offs,” said Malaysia.

(The open ended contact group has an overflow room from which observers follow televised proceedings. Even for Parties, only three secondary badges are given to each delegation to go into the contact group.)

Reifsnyder responded that there was no opportunity to televise the spin-off group discussions. “We can look into the possibilities, but our intention is to have report backs here (in the contact group) so that everybody knows what is happening,” said Reifsnyder.

Various spin-off groups reported back to the contact group and the status of the work in progress is

available on the UNFCCC [website](#).

On substance, major differences continue to remain between developed and developing countries on the various elements of the agreement, especially on the issue of ‘differentiation’.

According to sources, developed countries maintained their positions against differentiation between developed and developing countries as reflected under the Convention, and were working to sharpen their options so that this issue be resolved at the ministerial level.

For example, one developing country delegate said that in the finance informal-informal session, a proposal by the Umbrella Group raised the hackles of developing countries. The proposal presented was as follows: *“As part of a shared mobilization effort, Parties should...enhance the scale and effectiveness of climate finance by mobilizing climate finance from a wide variety of instruments and channels, provide, when in a position to do so, support for developing countries in need of support...”*

(Developing country negotiators view this proposal as a clear departure from the commitment of developed countries to provide climate finance to developing countries under the UNFCCC.)

“This (proposal) became a key bone of contention” and no advance was made in the negotiations, lamented a developing country negotiator.

Negotiations are expected to continue late into the night on Wednesday and whether more advance will be made in bridging divergent positions remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, in the contact group, the ADP Co-chairs have, since Tuesday, been facilitating the consideration of the draft decision text which accompanies the draft agreement, relating to the adoption of the agreement and the INDCs. (Further details will follow.)