

“Stock-taking meeting” midway through Tianjin shows divergence of views on process and outcome for Cancun

Tianjin, October 7 (Meena Raman) – At the UNFCCC climate talks in Tianjin, a “stock-taking” meeting was held on October 6 which revealed divergent views among several Parties on what the outcome of the forthcoming Cancun conference should be and how the process should move forward from Tianjin to Cancun.

The stock-taking exercise was carried out under the contact group of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA), for delegates to assess how much progress has been made so far during this one-week session in Tianjin, which is the last before the Cancun conference.

Differences of views emerged from among developing countries as well as among and with developed countries on their expectations for Cancun, with most Parties expressing disappointment on the slow and uneven progress of the negotiations so far this week.

While all Parties expressed the need for a balanced outcome under the AWG-LCA, there were divergent views on what “balance” means and what the content of the elements for a Cancun outcome should be.

Several developing countries stressed that “balance” must also importantly take account of the progress (or non progress) in the other track in the Kyoto Protocol. They stressed the importance of having an outcome in the Kyoto Protocol working group, for the protocol’s second commitment period. (It is notable that Norway also called for an outcome for the second commitment period of the protocol). Some of the countries also questioned the inclusion of some of the elements or terms in the Chair’s paper.

On the other hand, several developed countries stressed that there was not enough progress in the negotiations on mitigation. Some of them promoted accepting the Copenhagen Accord as the solution, with the United States stating that the balance sought was already in the Accord and if Parties started from the Accord, there

would be an outcome and if not, “the process was unhelpful.”

There was also lack of clarity on how to arrive at draft decision/decisions in Cancun and what would be the legal form of the outcome.

Much of the time of the meeting was also taken up by responses from Parties to a new one-page paper distributed by the Chair of the AWG-LCA Margarete Mukahanana-Sangarwe on ‘Possible elements of the Cancun outcome’ that she said she had produced following informal consultations. Sangarwe said that there “was a great deal of commonality” among Parties and that her paper reflected “some of issues of commonality”.

It was not clear what was the specific purpose of the listing of issues, whether it was meant to be a list of issues that could possibly be the subject of separate decisions in Cancun, or of a single decision, or whether it would merely serve as a guide to the drafting groups.

In their response, many countries said that not all elements listed were ripe for decisions and that there were elements which were also missing. Some developing countries were also worried that focusing on elements of an outcome would create a diversion from negotiations on the 13 August text. Bolivia and Nicaragua were concerned that on one hand Parties were supposed to be negotiating the text in drafting groups, as agreed to at the last session in Bonn, but on the other hand there were now separate discussions taking place on the elements for a Cancun outcome that were not based on the text-negotiations and which was diverting from the negotiations on text and which was not in line with the agreement that the work should now be focused on the text.

Sangarwe said that the paper was “not for approval but was a progress report on what Parties had started to do among themselves.” She said that there was need for further discussions on the elements and invited Parties to give their views on what Cancun could deliver. In response to a question by Pakistan on the status of the

paper, the Chair said that the paper “had no status” and if Parties could agree on the elements, it could guide the work in the drafting groups.

The elements listed in the paper were as follows:

- On shared vision – shared vision for long-term cooperative action, including a long-term global goal for emission reductions and process to review the long-term global goal and overall progress towards meeting that goal;
- On Adaptation – adaptation framework and institutional arrangements for its implementation and approach to address loss and damage;
- On Mitigation – economy-wide emission reduction commitments or actions by developed country Parties; MRV for developed country Parties’ commitments or actions; NAMAS by developing country Parties and associated support; MRV for developing countries NAMAS; readiness phases of activities that contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector (REDD-plus); work programme on mitigation in the agricultural sector; reducing emissions from bunker fuels; various approaches including opportunities for using markets to enhance the cost-effectiveness of and to promote mitigation actions and the economic and social consequences of response measures;
- On finance, technology and capacity-building – reporting on fast-start finance for 2010-2012; establishment of a new fund and process for its design; arrangements to improve coherence and coordination in climate change financing; mobilization of long-term finance; MRV of support; establishment of the Technology Mechanism, the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network and capacity -building.

Facilitators of the drafting groups also presented updates on the negotiations. The facilitator of the shared vision drafting group, Anders Turesson of Sweden said that two meetings were held and Parties had an initial consideration of paragraphs in the negotiating text on the review of the long-term goal and had come up with new text (relating to paragraphs 68-71 of chapter 1). Turesson said that the scope of the review needs to be resolved. He added that the elements of the Bali Action Plan could not be addressed. On the long-term global goal for emission reductions, there were different ways of expressing this and there was need for restructuring of the text for more clarity.

Kisihan Kumarsingh of Trinidad and Tobago, who facilitated the drafting group on adaptation, said that

Parties had agreed to continue the work as they did in Bonn, discussing clusters of issues rather than dealing with paragraphs line by line. He said that the discussions were going well to the point that Parties had exhausted discussions on the clusters. He expressed hope that a revised text would be presented by the end of week.

Auden Rosland of Norway who co-facilitated the mitigation contact group said that work advanced on the consideration of elements of mitigation which was constructive. He said that there was an exchange of views on key issues in relation to paragraphs 1(b)(i) (relating to the mitigation commitments of developed countries) and 1(b)(ii) (on the nationally appropriate actions of developing countries) of the Bali Action Plan. Although the exchange was substantive, difficult issues remain. In the case of paragraph 1(b)(i), the issues were on the inscription of economy wide targets for developed countries, their measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) and relation to the Kyoto Protocol and various aspects of comparability of efforts.

In relation to paragraph 1(b)(ii), the issues were about the registration of NAMAS, their MRV, national communications, GHG inventories and international consultation and analysis (of unsupported mitigation actions).

Rosland said that there was good progress in relation to paragraph 1(b)(iii) on REDD-plus (reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries etc.)

Burhan Gafoor of Singapore co-facilitated the drafting group on finance, technology and capacity-building. He reported on the negotiations regarding finance and said that 3 meetings were held which dealt with the establishment of the new fund; a new body and fast-start finance. On the new fund, there was a spin-off group where discussions were constructive. On the new body, there continues to be divergence of views and on how such a body is linked to other institutional structures within the financial architecture and the broader architecture. Gafoor said that there was divergence of views on fast start finance as to whether and how the issue is to be dealt with in Cancun.

Marinus Goote of Netherlands reported on the work on technology transfer and said that Parties discussed the relationship of the issue to finance and the mandate and composition of the Technology Executive Committee. He commented that the discussions were continuing and were productive.

Following the report of the facilitators, the Chair invited Parties to give their views.

Pakistan said that work on the possible elements for Cancun must come from a party driven process and that any process that remains exclusive will be deficient. It said that there was no discussion yet on the issue of ‘vulnerability’ in relation to adaptation and this element was not reflected.

China while expressing appreciation for the effort of the Chair, said that the process was party- driven and governed by the Bali Action Plan. On the possible elements for Cancun, Parties must bear in mind the mandate of the BAP and the need for balance in the structure of those elements as well as balance in the two negotiating tracks (AWG-LCA and Ad-hoc Working Group under the Kyoto Protocol) and within the two tracks.

China said that it was better to follow the elements of the BAP. It was surprised to find (in the Chair’s paper) separation in the concept of MRV of support and of NAMAS. The MRV in the BAP is of mitigation actions that are supported and enabled by finance, technology and capacity-building which are both MRV-ed (the actions supported and the support itself) it said. On fast-start finance, what was important was actual delivery of finance and not just the making of any pledges and there was need for guidelines on reporting to avoid double counting of elements.

South Africa said that Parties were working under the mandate of the BAP and the Bali Roadmap under the two tracks. The Cancun outcome should be legally binding and there was need for balanced progress on the Bali Roadmap. It said that there was language in the text that may compromise the final outcome in terms of integrity and outcome.

South Africa proposed the need for decisions for an enhanced climate change regime beyond 2012. There was need to have clear language that these decisions are advancing key elements of the building blocks of the BAP towards a legally-binding agreement. It said that decisions could be either in a single omnibus or an overarching process decision where there is decision on the legal form of the outcome.

South Africa said that there must be decisions in the two tracks with amendments to Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol or alternative decision/decisions that reflect the commitments of Parties to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. The BAP talks of implementation now, up to and beyond 2012 and so, there was need for a set of operational decisions taken in that respect. Its key concern was the framing of decisions in a manner that would compromise a legally binding agreement.

Grenada, speaking for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** expressed concern over the lack of time and on procedural tactics to block progress in substance. It wanted progress for a balanced package that creates the post 2012 regime in the context of the BAP where there would be a legally binding outcome along side the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol. It welcomed the Chair’s paper as a useful map.

Peru, speaking also for Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama agreed with the paper produced by the Chair and said that further elaboration was needed and hoped for progress on draft decisions by the end of the week. It said that a set of decisions for Cancun are a milestone for a legally binding outcome in South Africa and for also a second commitment period for emissions reductions by Annex 1 Parties under the Kyoto Protocol.

Egypt said that it was not sure if there can be results before Cancun on the issue of (carbon) ‘markets’. It reiterated that a fundamental element for a Cancun outcome under the AWG-LCA was a parallel outcome for a second commitment period by Annex 1 Parties for emissions reductions under the Kyoto Protocol.

Venezuela said that the Chair’s paper only relates to outcomes in the AWG-LCA and that there was no movement in the Kyoto Protocol track and this cannot be the approach. It said that on the issue of reporting on fast-start finance, there must be delivery of finance before there is reporting.

Cuba said that the shared vision section is not only about the long-term global goal but also of other details. The whole core of the finance discussion or package is on long-term financing. He expressed concern that the Chair’s paper talks about “mobilizing finance” when what is reflected in the BAP instead is for the provision of new, additional and predictable finance and not “mobilization” which is an alien concept.

India said that while it appreciated the Chair’s efforts at making efforts to expedite progress in the negotiations, there was need to take into account realistically the level of consensus that remains. It also stressed the need for balanced outcome in the two tracks which should be comprehensive and consistent with the BAP and the Convention. In relation to the Chair’s paper on the possible elements for Cancun, it said that the issue of unilateral trade measures must be reflected in the shared vision and it was unsure of the issue of bunker fuels was a mature for consideration when it should remain an issue under the Kyoto Protocol. It said that the elements must emerge from what the drafting groups have said.

Bolivia said that when Parties left Bonn in August, they said they will work on the negotiating text to clean it up and remove brackets. Three days had gone-by and no brackets have been removed. Parties have instead gone to repeat process that they had in July this year where there was an exchange in points of view of possible elements for an outcome in Cancun. With facilitators drafting decisions, Parties were losing the process that was arrived at in August. It said that Parties should be working on the negotiating text to come back to a shorter text and the process was now unclear. Another concern Bolivia had was that the texts which are being drafted are more about the process than about the substance. It said that Parties were not negotiating but were exchanging views on possible elements for an outcome in Cancun. On the paper distributed by the Chair, Bolivia said that it had problems with the some elements and they were some elements which were missing.

Nicaragua also expressed sadness that Parties were repeating a process that they had previously gone through. There was need for more flexibility and political will for more progress in the negotiations. In relation to the Chair's paper on the elements, it said that some elements were not ripe yet for inclusion and some were missing

Brazil said that a balanced set of decisions were needed for all elements of the BAP and for decisions in the two track negotiations. It was important to capture the essence of issues knowing that Cancun will not be the final word on all issues. It must however be a step forward. Hence, there was need to for an approach that moves with comprehensiveness but not with the exhaustion of all the elements. It said that the Chair's paper on the possible elements provided a fair basis to continue work. It expressed hope for Parties in Cancun to be able to adopt a package of decisions for the sake of the multilateral system.

Saudi Arabia said that the Chair's paper was in a way picking and choosing of elements and was not comprehensive in all the elements of the BAP. The elements must reflect what Parties were negotiating in the text.

Singapore said that any balanced outcome must address the legal form and a legally binding agreement and should not hasten the demise of the Kyoto Protocol

Mexico said that as the incoming Presidency of the COP in Cancun, there was need to admit that Parties were not making enough progress. The package for Cancun must truly be a package that can deliver immediate action for implementation of the Convention and should built on a legally binding agreement. It also needs to be one that addresses the two negotiating tracks.

Belgium for the **European Union** said that for a balanced package, it was clear this was without prejudice to the legally binding outcome for both negotiating tracks for all Parties. In mitigation and MRV, it said that there had been no progress. It said there was need to understand the mitigation pledges in the AWG-LCA track. There was not enough progress and balance between paragraphs 1(b)(i) and 1(b)(ii).

The **United States** said that at this stage of the process, it appeared as if Parties were bogged down. It said that it was foolish to waste time in areas where there is no agreement. It said that vast countries have associated with the Copenhagen Accord which was balanced in key issues and key elements for all Parties. Referring to the Accord, the US said that there was balance in the context of mitigation for both developed and developing countries, transparency in relation to MRV of supported actions and of support, and for unsupported actions, the ICA. There was also balance in relation to finance. It said that there was need to start from the Copenhagen Accord and if Parties did, there would be time to have an outcome. If not, the process was unhelpful. It said that the process must work on the hard areas and negotiate agreement.

The US said that a number of countries had referred to its domestic realities and it stressed that it was committed to continuing its efforts on reducing GHGs and in being fully engaged in meeting its mitigation and finance commitments.

Australia said that for the Umbrella Group, mitigation, MRV, ICA, REDD-plus, finance and technology are all part of a carefully designed package. It said that there has not been progress in relation to mitigation, MRV and ICA and asked for focus on these issues. There was need for affirmation of the mitigation pledges of developed and developing countries and for update of the pledges in the AWG-LCA and also the Kyoto Protocol. It stressed the need for an operational framework for MRV and ICA.

Japan said that more time should not be used in relation to the negotiating text as there would be no progress but instead, time should be used to extract the elements for decisions by the Conference of Parties in Cancun which are based on the Copenhagen Accord. It said that the Chair of the AWG-LCA should put effort in drafting decisions for Cancun.

Russia said that the results of work were below expectations. It was seeking a comprehensive treaty outcome encompassing all Parties and there was a need for a set of decisions to design this.