

AWG-LCA 5 AND AWG-KP 7 HIGHLIGHTS: SUNDAY 29 MARCH 2009

The Bonn Climate Change Talks opened on Sunday afternoon with a welcoming ceremony, followed by the opening sessions of AWG-LCA 5 and AWG-KP 7.

WELCOMING CEREMONY

Matthias Machnig, State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany, highlighted the need to switch to a full negotiating mode in Bonn and stressed that the agreement in Copenhagen should be guided not only by what is possible but also by what is necessary to address climate change. He also welcomed the US delegation and stated that the US is now “back in the game.”

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer noted that only eight months, constituting six weeks of real negotiating time, remain before COP 15. He highlighted the documents prepared for the session to focus discussions under both AWGs. De Boer thanked Germany for its financial support for the session and underscored the need for further funding to organize the meeting in Bangkok in September and any additional sessions deemed necessary.

AWG-LCA 5

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Chair Michael Zammit Cutajar opened the session and parties adopted the agenda and organization of work (FCCC/AWG/LCA/2009/1 and 2).

OPENING STATEMENTS: Sudan, for the G-77/CHINA, called for an open, party-driven, transparent, and inclusive process that focuses on implementing the Bali Action Plan. He lamented that many submissions by members of the G-77/China had been omitted or were not properly reflected in the Chair’s text, such as specific proposals on adaptation, finance and technology. Stressing that the negotiations should be based on parties’ proposals and submissions, he said the Chair’s text should not serve as a basis for negotiation.

Algeria, for the AFRICAN GROUP, underscored the need for adaptation and massively scaled-up and predictable funding. He stressed that “a shared vision” should not be focused only on mitigating climate change but also on contending with its impacts.

Australia, for the UMBRELLA GROUP, highlighted the role of major economies and identified the need for a global agreement that is: informed by science; achievable; comprehensive; and able to reflect the full spectrum of mitigation and adaptation options. Noting that the work of the

AWG-KP and the AWG-LCA will form the basis for agreement in Copenhagen, she underscored the need for consistency and coherence between the two groups.

Grenada, for the ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (AOSIS), and Lesotho, for the LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCs), called for stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations below 350 parts per million (ppm) and limiting temperature increases to below 1.5°C. AOSIS emphasized the human dimension of climate change and expressed concern with attempts to conflate adaptation funding with official development assistance. LDCs underscored the need for adaptation technologies and urged the AWG-LCA to establish concrete mechanisms for their deployment. He stressed that financing mechanisms should be fully accountable to the UNFCCC.

The Czech Republic, for the EUROPEAN UNION (EU), noted the upcoming meeting of the Group of 20. He highlighted the need for low carbon development strategies and said developing countries should reduce emissions by 15-30% below business as usual levels by 2020. He also said a framework for action on adaptation should be a part of the agreement in Copenhagen.

The Republic of Korea, for the ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY GROUP, highlighted Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and supported the creation of a NAMA registry. She also underscored the need for further exchange of information between AWG-LCA and AWG-KP. INDONESIA stressed development needs and the importance of addressing adaptation and financial and technological support as well as mitigation.

The US highlighted the urgency of addressing climate change, identified the need to be guided by science and pragmatism, and stressed links between sustainable development and the transformation to a low carbon economy. He recognized the unique position of the US as the largest historical emitter of greenhouse gases and as a country with important capabilities, but underscored that the US alone cannot provide the solution to the climate change problem. Calling for significant action by major economies, he highlighted measures by the US and China in their economic stimulus packages to promote clean energy. He underscored President Obama’s plans for a federal cap-and-trade system that will set the US pathway to cutting emissions by 15% from current levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050, and highlighted technological leap-frogging by developing countries. The US also called for a shared vision that is guided by science and contains clear milestones, and identified the need to establish

a structure for significant financial support for developing countries, and for an effective use of adaptation resources focusing on the most vulnerable countries.

BANGLADESH called for a mechanism for prompt financial support to respond to localized extreme events and highlighted the proposal for an international air travel levy to raise additional funding for adaptation. The GAMBIA highlighted the urgency of adaptation action and called for a comprehensive approach, including building of financial and technological capacity and institutional support. ARGENTINA expressed hope for an agreement on long-term global objectives, including medium- and long-term commitments, and technological and economic assistance that contributes to the eradication of poverty in developing countries.

NIGERIA noted the need for immediate action, and called for an ambitious emissions reduction target, negotiated in a flexible manner in an effort to reach a compromise. INDIA, with SAUDI ARABIA, cautioned against revising the principles of the Convention. He called for deep, mid-term emission reductions from Annex I countries and the fulfillment of commitments related to finance and technology transfer. TUVALU urged a substantial outcome at Copenhagen, and called for accelerated actions by all countries to reduce emissions drastically and urgently. He highlighted the need for substantial outcomes on adaptation and for new and additional resources.

SAUDI ARABIA cautioned against overlooking non-carbon dioxide greenhouse gas emissions, and opposed proposals to reduce fossil fuels imports, given impacts to those economies that depend on such commodities. TURKEY noted that his country is in the process of acceding to the Kyoto Protocol.

LONG-TERM COOPERATIVE ACTION: Chair Zammit Cutajar introduced the relevant documents (FCCC/AWGLCA/2009/2-4; FCCC/AWGLCA/2009/Misc.1 and Add.1-3; and FCCC/AWGLCA/2009/Misc.2) and thanked the Secretariat for helping to elaborate the Chair's note.

Parties agreed to establish a contact group on shared vision and a contact group on mitigation, both chaired by Chair Zammit Cutajar. They also established contact groups on adaptation, co-chaired by Thomas Kolly (Switzerland) and William Agyemang-Bonsu (Ghana), and on delivering on technology and financing, chaired by Vice-Chair Luiz Figueiredo Machado (Brazil). The Philippines, for the G-77/CHINA, underscored the party-driven nature of the process, said only party proposals should be considered, and requested chairs' summaries of the contact group discussions.

Arthur Rolle, Chair of the Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGGT), presented three reports on: the long-term perspective beyond 2012; sectoral approaches; and future financing options and performance indicators.

OTHER MATTERS: Chair Zammit Cutajar noted ongoing consultations on possible extra sessions to be held from 10-14 August 2009 in Bonn, Germany, and from 2-13 November 2009 in a location to be decided.

AWG-KP 7

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Chair Harald Dovland opened the session and parties adopted the agenda and organization of work (FCCC/KP/AWG/2009/1&2; FCCC/KP/AWG/2008/8). Eric Mugurusi (Tanzania) reported on ongoing consultations to elect the AWG's new Chair and Vice-Chair.

OPENING STATEMENTS: Sudan, for G-77/CHINA, expressed concern with slow progress in fulfilling the group's mandate under Protocol Article 3.9 (further commitments). He stressed the need to focus at this session on the aggregate scale

of Annex I emission reductions and adopt conclusions on draft legal amendment text, and called for an organization of the agenda that reflects this dual objective.

Australia, for the UMBRELLA GROUP, highlighted pre-session discussions on the complexity of assessing comparable mitigation efforts. Noting co-dependence with the AWG-LCA, he emphasized the need for consistency and coherence between the two groups.

Grenada, for AOSIS, stressed the need to incorporate scientific information released since the IPCC AR4, which points to climate change effects occurring much faster than projected and greatly underestimated costs of inaction. He called for stabilization at well below 350 ppm with emissions peaking by 2015. Nigeria, for the AFRICAN GROUP, highlighted the importance of discussing spillover effects.

The EU stressed the need to limit warming below 2°C and to avoid the possible crossing of critical thresholds. He highlighted synergies with the AWG-LCA and called for a comprehensive, meaningful conclusion to be reached in Copenhagen.

Switzerland, on behalf of the ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY GROUP, supported the inclusion of new documented greenhouse gases and the improvement of the flexibility mechanisms. He urged information exchange between the two AWGs.

Lesotho, for the LDCs, called for deep and ambitious reduction commitments on behalf of Annex I countries, and for ensuring that all efforts under the Protocol do not impose constraints on the most vulnerable countries. He suggested that rules and procedures be revised to attract foreign direct investment to LDCs, and that LDCs get broader access to the Clean Development Mechanism. VENEZUELA expressed concern with the UNFCCC Executive Secretary's declarations made at other forums regarding carbon capture and storage.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As the meeting opened on Sunday afternoon, two topics seemed to dominate discussions in the busy corridors of the Maritim: the pre-session events and what many saw as the US "comeback" to the process. Most parties welcomed the fact that the US statement was delivered by such a high-level representative and many were also satisfied with the general message. "For eight years, we've been waiting for this," commented one participant. The details, however, generated more diverse reactions. While some delegates lauded the US "pragmatic" approach, others wondered what this pragmatism might mean for other countries, and some also expressed disappointment at the outlined emission reduction goals. A seasoned negotiator noted the importance of the US acknowledging their domestic challenges as part of the process, in order to avoid another "Kyoto situation" where the US signed but the Senate never ratified the treaty.

Participants were also commenting on the pre-session events, which took place on Thursday and Friday. Many delegates, particularly those working on AWG-KP issues, seemed satisfied, especially praising the constructive nature of the informal consultations on the flexibility mechanisms. Some wondered, however, whether ongoing discussions about the AWG-KP's chairmanship would start slowing the process. On the AWG-LCA pre-session events, a group of developing countries expressed disappointment with the "focus" document prepared by the AWG-LCA Chair to help discussions in Bonn as, in their view, it did not adequately address technology and finance and placed a disproportionate emphasis on mitigation.