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CLIMATE CHANGE CONVENTION COP-1 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 29 MARCH 1995

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The COW met all day to discuss Agenda Item 5(a)(iii), review of adequacy of Article 4.2(a) and (b), including proposals relating to a protocol and decisions on follow-up. Amb. Estrada summarized the Bureau's discussion about improving NGO access, explaining that the afternoon session would take place in a different room with seats for NGOs.

The Secretariat then provided background on the review of adequacy of commitments. He noted that INC-11 had agreed that present commitments are only a first step toward meeting Convention goals, and that the COP should take appropriate actions based on this review. He noted the AOSIS protocol is contained in A/AC.237/L.23 and the German elements paper is A/AC.237/L.23/Add.1.

IPCC Chair Bert Bolin summarized scientific findings on climate change. He noted the complex role of aerosols, which diminish or mask greenhouse warming in the short term, but whose temporary protection could be lost quickly if their emissions are reduced. Because of the time lag between emissions and global temperature increase and the delay in social and economic response, there is a hidden threat. Uncertainty in model predictions does not decrease risk, but simply makes the risk more difficult to pinpoint. The threat from rising sea levels may not be as great as that of increasing vulnerability in coastal areas due to possible storm effects related to global warming.

The Philippines, on behalf of the G-77 and China, said that implementation of current commitments should be the COP's chief concern, and responsibility should not shift from Annex I to non-Annex I Parties. He called for further discussion of a protocol, noting that implementation is the current priority.

Samoa, on behalf of AOSIS, and supported by Fiji and Norway, called for adoption of the AOSIS protocol. He said the AOSIS States proposed the draft protocol because they are being hit first and hardest by climate change that they are not responsible for, adding that continuing emissions at present levels would be a disaster for all. He termed the 20% emissions reduction by developed countries in the AOSIS protocol a small but necessary first step toward the 60-80% reduction scientists say is necessary for stabilization of atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases. Postponing this decision would require larger and more difficult cuts, while an early decision will prevent countries from facing an unacceptable choice between a ruined economy and a ruined climate. He summarized the main features of the AOSIS protocol: an additional commitment that developed countries reduce CO₂ emissions by 2005 to 20% below 1990 levels; no additional commitments for developing countries; a comprehensive approach

to other greenhouse gases in a phased manner; and a coordination mechanism for cooperation on economic, administrative and other implementation measures.

France, on behalf of the EU, reiterated its view that Annex I Party commitments for 2000 are insufficient and urged COP-1 to map out a protocol mandate, which would establish an open-ended *ad hoc* working group, require a report for COP-2, and set guidelines for conclusions.

Japan expressed flexibility, noting that both the AOSIS and German proposals should be considered. **India** endorsed the G-77 and China's statement and expressed concern about certain parts of the AOSIS proposal. He stressed the need for a protocol that imposes stringent commitments only on Annex I Parties. **The Russian Federation** noted that decreasing energy production alone may not accomplish the Convention's goals but will cause economic hardship. He stated that the AOSIS proposal lacks significant scientific basis, and he stressed the importance of the second IPCC report.

Norway noted that a protocol would avoid reopening the language of the Convention and advocated joint targets for OECD countries based on equitable sharing of responsibility. **Canada** asked Prof. Bolin if sulfate emissions should be reduced because aerosols produce a cooling effect. Bolin warned against attempts to balance different emissions. **Austria** asked Bolin if reducing present emissions was preferable to later reductions since technological advances will likely allow easier reductions in the future. Bolin replied that innovations are not guaranteed and measures should not be postponed.

Brazil said delegates should not prejudge the mechanisms for perfecting implementation of the Convention, which could include the drafting of a new instrument, a protocol, other measures and means, timetables and targets, or some combination of these. He said developing countries' right to development should not be compromised, and that trying to enroll developing countries in a hasty manner or by making linkages with joint implementation would not solve any problems. **Antigua and Barbuda** said island States view sea level rise as the primary threat. The AOSIS protocol takes a universal view rather than narrowly confining its approach to the views of those living on large continental shelves.

Switzerland said Parties should prepare a protocol by 1997. She called for an *ad hoc* working group to conduct negotiations, adopt a mandate and schedule, and take a coordinated and cooperative approach to reductions. These approaches could include emissions and energy efficiency standards for appliances, transportation fuel efficiency standards, transport taxes, and carbon and/or energy taxes. **Hungary** said negotiations on further measures should begin as soon as possible, with COP-1 deciding on a mandate for negotiations based on the EU's proposal. **Germany** said a commitment to at least keep emissions at 1990 levels after 2000 is a necessary step irrespective of other action on reductions. An immediate framework for reductions is an urgent requirement.

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Delegates should adopt a clear mandate as a starting point for protocol negotiations. He added that only if industrialized countries agreed to reductions could other States be expected to take on commitments at an appropriate time.

The Czech Republic agreed that the commitments are not sufficient and suggested that the needs of countries with economies in transition be considered. He supported the creation of a special working group to work on a draft protocol which should take the AOSIS protocol and the German elements paper as a starting point. **Indonesia** noted that the key element of the draft protocol should be a clear indication of the commitments of Annex I Parties.

Argentina supported the AOSIS protocol and German elements paper and called for protocol negotiations. Sectoral policies on efficient uses of energy and those favoring sustainable development should also be considered. He said that new commitments should be assumed by developed countries and the protocol should include all GHGs as well as ways to strengthen the information and assessment machinery. **Australia** expressed surprise about comments that it is blocking progress and noted its long-standing track record as an active, committed participant in these negotiations. She called for COP-1 to produce clear guidelines on the negotiations of a protocol. The protocol must not limit action to one group of countries, but should involve action by all Parties within the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

China said a majority of States is not yet ready to negotiate a protocol. Full implementation of existing commitments is an essential step for Annex I Parties. China cannot accept the creation of new categories of countries and thought it inappropriate for developing country Parties to undertake new commitments.

Colombia shared the view that the commitments are inadequate because they do not lead to stabilization and they do not specify targets beyond 2000. These commitments should not be extended to developing countries and jeopardize their right to development. She supported establishing a working group.

The US highlighted the IPCC's contribution of scientific information. He reflected on the US action plan to reduce emissions implemented approximately six months ago, including a pilot programme on Joint Implementation. He said that commitments are inadequate because there was no guidance on action beyond 2000, but the global nature of the problem requires broad international participation. He added that a drafting group should work on a mandate to begin a negotiating process within the SBI, with the SBSTA working on an assessment for limiting GHGs. **Slovakia** said that existing commitments will not meet the Convention's objectives and called for negotiations on a protocol to conclude in 1997-98 and for Annex I Parties to take the lead.

New Zealand said that a clear mandate was critical for COP-1 since current commitments are not adequate, and called for a cooperative approach based on common but differentiated responsibilities. The mandate should include: work towards a protocol under the SBI with a legally-binding instrument in 1997; the inclusion of all GHGs; action for the post-2000 period; a lead taken by developed countries with reduction efforts by those developing countries contributing most to emissions; and the creation of a business consultative mechanism. **Saudi Arabia** said that although its approach and concerns are different, it is not blocking progress. Saudi Arabia is concerned that it would be affected economically by the different measures to reduce consumption of fossil fuels, particularly oil. He said that the COP should not take hasty steps, but should wait until the IPCC's second assessment report is released.

Poland said that this COP should take decisions about further steps after 2000. He supported establishing an open-ended working group to negotiate a protocol, as proposed by the EU, but it is not necessary to establish deadlines now.

Bangladesh shared the concerns expressed by the G-77 and China, Samoa and Fiji. He said there must be a definite commitment to reduce CO₂ emissions beyond 2000 and any

country that exceeds the identified standard should be subject to some form of emissions tax.

The Republic of Korea said that the principal responsibility for reduction of emissions resides with developed countries who have not met current commitments. Additionally, the socio-economic conditions of most developing countries does not allow them to concentrate on climate change. He supported the draft AOSIS protocol. **Mauritania** said that Africa was most adversely affected by climate change. It was clear that the replenishment of the interim financial mechanism and transfer of technology require new impetus since these are critical for developing countries. A universal negotiation process should be established within the COP and not in a subsidiary body.

Kuwait said that information presented by Bolin was not reflected by prior speakers. Quoting from the Report of IPCC's Working Group III, he said that emissions scenarios are not appropriate inputs to negotiation of possible emission reductions. He agreed that it was premature to engage in protocol drafting exercises since Annex I Parties have not met current commitments. **Iran** agreed that full implementation of commitments by Annex I Parties must be the first priority. A decision on inadequacy of commitments should wait until the release of the IPCC's second assessment report. Discussion on commitments should also include financial commitments and transfer of technology.

The Netherlands said that it would be irresponsible to postpone further action. The commitments of Annex I Parties are clearly inadequate. Industrialized countries should take the next step and significantly reduce their emissions. The COP should agree on a mandate and guidance for negotiating a protocol to be adopted in 1997. **Thailand** said that Annex I Parties must implement their commitments before negotiations take place on new commitments. The decision to negotiate a protocol should only be taken after the release of the second IPCC assessment report. In the negotiation of a protocol, no additional commitments should be imposed on the developing countries.

IN THE CORRIDORS

While the COW has focused on adequacy of commitments, there is still lobbying in the corridors on the location of the Permanent Secretariat. The Mayor of Bonn invited delegates to a lunchtime *Zusammenkunft* to discuss the benefits of moving the Secretariat to Bonn. Meanwhile, according to some estimates, the staff costs in Toronto would be lower than Geneva, Bonn or Montevideo. While it appeared as though Geneva was the front-runner at INC-11, the lobbying may be far from over.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Plenary will meet this morning to hear statements from UNDP Administrator James Gustave Speth, as well as representatives from: South Africa, Ukraine, UNIDO, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the ECE, the International Energy Agency, SPREP, the Mayor of Kampala, Uganda (on behalf of the Mayors' Summit), Climate Action Network Pacific (on behalf of environmental NGOs) and the International Chamber of Commerce (on behalf of business NGOs).

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: The COW will meet in the afternoon to continue the debate on Agenda Item 5(a)(iii), review of adequacy of commitments contained in Article 4.2(a) and (b). If the Committee is able to conclude its debate, the next item scheduled for discussion will be Agenda Item 5(a)(iv), criteria for joint implementation. Look for an announcement about the establishment of a drafting group on the adequacy of commitments.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER WORKSHOP: WWF will host a workshop on technology transfer with a focus on sustainable energy technologies at 1:15 pm in Room 6.