

**Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the Convention
(AWG-LCA)**

Opening of the seventh session - Bangkok, Monday, 28 September 2009

Statement by the Chair, Michael Zammit Cutajar

We have heard today a number of important messages from outside, notably from the New York summit on Climate Change. The COP President-designate urged us to “keep it simple, political and short.” Similarly, my scenario note for this session called on you – the Parties – to concentrate your negotiations in this body on the elements of an ambitious, effective and fair agreed outcome that you consider “politically essential”.

Some of you have asked me what I meant by “politically essential”, so let me give you an illustration in the form of a personal view of some essential deliverables.

I recall a one-liner I wrote the morning after the Kyoto Protocol was adopted: it said that the Protocol was the most important economic agreement ever negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations.

What would I like to say the morning after COP 15? That the global community is united in pursuing a rapid and just transition to modes of development that will:

- use resources efficiently and thus be low in emission intensity,
- provide access for poor people to basic services, including sustainable energy,
- strengthen resilience to climatic impacts, and
- contribute to building a fairer world.

And that this community is politically committed to realizing this transition through cooperation based on the Convention:

- guided by a science-based long-term global goal for emission reductions,
- with each member contributing, according to its responsibilities and capabilities, to the gains that will accrue to all from cooperative action,
- and with all responding to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

Clearly, leadership in moving forward on this path rests with the developed countries. The ambition of their commitments to reduce GHG emissions in the medium term, to maintain reduction pathways to mid-century and beyond, to invest in technological innovation, and to provide scaled-up financial and technological support for the actions of developing countries will set the tone for the whole cooperative venture. Ambition in each of these countries is tempered by domestic political and economic constraints. But each has the moral responsibility to seek to expand the bounds of political and economic feasibility.

Negotiations on the numbers and dates that will quantify this leadership -and on situating it within the context of cooperative action by all - will unfold, until “the night before the morning after ” in Copenhagen. But there is much that can be done here in Bangkok to shape the framework – the agreed outcome - into which these numbers and dates will fit.

On climate **finance**, there is scope to advance agreement on sourcing, governance, eligibility, access and accountability.

On **technology**, we have the opportunity to design a mechanism that will realize the promise of the Convention – a mechanism that will work sector-by-sector and technology-by-technology, mobilizing public and private expertise and finance, in order to:

- drive the “diffusion, including transfer” of *existing* technologies and practices, the ones on which countries must now rely to achieve their medium-term plans and goals; and
- promote cooperative research, development and sharing of the *new* technologies that will take us to mid-century, inter alia through a network of centres of excellence.¹

In the (translated) words of China’s President Hu Jintao at the recent New York Summit, this should be “a sound interactive mechanism with governments playing the leading role, businesses taking part and market principles at play”.

In both these areas – finance and technology - Parties can define what is to be done *within* the UNFCCC, in a strengthened and coherent set of **institutional arrangements**, and what can be “outsourced” by the Conference of the Parties under condition of genuine guidance from and accountability to it.

Turning from means of support to areas of action, there is wide convergence on the need for enhanced plans and programmes for **adaptation** and strengthened international cooperation. The essential deliverable to be negotiated, in my view, is a specific arrangement for adaptation finance for developing countries, additional to ODA. That will drive action across the adaptation front, on which significant progress can be achieved here.

With regard to **mitigation actions by developing countries**, in their transition to low-emission growth, Parties can work in Bangkok to define the mechanisms for providing the enabling support indicated in the Bali Action Plan. Many of these countries are already undertaking or planning such actions as a consequence of their autonomous political will; external support will encourage them to expand the range and ambition of such actions. In particular, incentives for **REDD-plus** activities can realize the substantial mitigation potential of forests in developing countries on the global scale. This session can build on progress already registered on this subject.

As for **mitigation commitments or actions by developed countries**, understanding can be advanced on the question of comparability of efforts – including comparability with mitigation efforts and related procedures and mechanisms envisaged under the Kyoto Protocol.

There are, of course, other important specifics under the mitigation heading –the role of markets and offsets, emissions from bunkers, the consequences of response measure, to name a few – and these will be highlighted when dedicated work on mitigation starts later today.

¹ Cf. Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), recent cooperative research on vaccines ...

But I wanted draw to a conclusion with reference to some general aspects of mitigation that this session needs to consider and on which it can start to search for common ground. These aspects, addressed in proposals by Parties, include the following:

- what is to be common and what differentiated in frameworks for mitigation action by all Parties;
- whether commitments to mitigation actions are binding only nationally or also internationally;
- how to build confidence and trust by enhancing the “credible transparency” of national mitigation efforts, without intruding upon national sovereignty; and
- how such transparency may be achieved by building upon existing provisions and practices under the Convention regarding the communication of information related to implementation, including national communications, GHG inventories and projections.

I do now conclude with two precautionary remarks:

First, I believe the time has come to give serious consideration to the coherence of the work of the two AWGs and to the means for achieving this. With so little time left, we cannot afford duplication of negotiating effort. I invite reactions on this point after due consideration.

Nor can we afford the contamination of our difficult negotiations by tensions arising in trade relations. Our Convention provides guidance on this matter in its article 3, paragraph 5. Specific trade disputes need to be addressed in the right forum.

That, therefore, is your Chair’s personal view – incomplete in substance and informal in its expression – of what “politically essential” might include. I hope it may be useful in stimulating the concentration of your negotiating efforts. With the support of our Vice-Chair and our “college” of Co-Chairs and facilitators, I shall do my best to help you achieve progress in that direction.