



Africa accuses negotiators of killing Kyoto Protocol

Copenhagen, Denmark (PANA) - The African group at the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, has expressed concern at what it sees as a new attempt to kill the Kyoto Protocol and has demanded for the continuation of talks on the Kyoto Protocol.

The 53-member African group on Monday said it was injustice to change the rules close to the end of the game, and that the conference must stand by the rules.

It said discontinuing the Kyoto Protocol means "accepting the death of the only one legally binding instrument that exists now and is functioning.

"In this process, the Kyoto Protocol is of paramount importance to us, we cannot accept the killing of the Kyoto Protocol. Killing of the Kyoto Protocol will mean the killing of Africa, and before accepting that we should all die first."

Algerian Ambassador Kamel Djemouai told reporters that the conference was now faced with a situation were it agrees to keep the Kyoto Protocol or to live without it, but warned that discarding the Kyoto Protocol would mean agreeing to accept the death of the only legally-binding instrument that exists now and is functioning.

He said the two-track negotiations should continue as agreed.

African countries have refused to continue negotiations unless talks on a second commitment period to the Kyoto Protocol are prioritized ahead of broader discussions on a second LCA track (Ad hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative Action).

"It took 7 years for the Kyoto Protocol to enter into force, the next treaty may take more than that even if there is a political will," Djemouai said in explaining the stand of the African group.

He proposed that the conference should instead use the Bali action plan, which he said was there to complete the elements and provisions of the Kyoto Protocol and not to replace it.

Djemouai said the African group on Monday held consultations and addressed the presidency of the conference, making it clear that the African group would not go along with one track (plenary) of negotiations, which has left the Kyoto Protocol issue outside.

Supporting Africa's demand, WWF said the current uncertainty about the future of the Kyoto Protocol was creating a lot of mistrust and resentment within these negotiations.

"We believe a continuation of the Kyoto Protocol is necessary part of the two-protocol outcome of Copenhagen and we support Africa's demands for this," WWF Global Climate Initiative leader Kim Carstensen said.

"It is a package of the two tracks in the negotiations, so given the limited amount of time it would be good to have parallel consultations," Carstensen said.

Responding to Africa's demand, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer said most other countries, apart from African nations, want to see the continuation of the Kyoto Protocol, and that the presidency would Tuesday engage all heads of delegations and ministers to discuss this concern.

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