

President's informal stocktaking plenary

Statement by H.E. Ms. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, COP 17/CMP7 President

6 December 2011

Dear Excellencies, Colleagues,

Thank you for your participation in this informal stocktaking meeting.

I appreciate your willingness to work with us so that we all have a clear and precise view of the steps that we'll be taking together in the next few days. I propose that we use the time available to us today to update Ministers and other heads of delegation as they arrive for the high-level segment on the status of negotiations. In order to do so, I have been working closely with the four Chairs, the coordinators of the negotiating groups and with the secretariat.

One week into the process, the conditions are in place to reach a broad and balanced package of decisions that leads us into an international era of increasingly effective action on climate change. This week, here in Durban, is our moment to make the deal that the world is expecting us to make.

Now is the time for us to be bold in our thinking and creativity, respecting our national positions, but at the same time, and more importantly, to address the imperative of delivering on the global threat of climate change. We must continue working with a renewed sense of urgency this week. The presence of so many Ministers and other Heads of Delegation is a manifestation that everyone is now ready to take our deliberations to a new level. A level of creativity, finding compromise, finding common ground, and finding solutions. Let us not wait until the final hour of Friday to reach agreement. I believe that we can complete the package before the end of this conference.

Discussions of this importance can only succeed if there is confidence among the Parties and in the process itself. I believe that, with the commitment and dedication shown by all, we can reach an understanding here in Durban.

Success is only achievable with the commitment by all to an open, transparent and inclusive process.

My Presidency will continue to honour these principles as we move into the second week of discussions, and our count down to Friday. I will strive for an early conclusion of our business on Friday.

As our focus over the past week has been on building agreements, let me say that work has been launched and are advancing in both the COP and the CMP.

You would recall that at the first informal stocktaking meeting on Saturday, I announced that Ambassador Mxakato-Diseko from my team would undertake informal consultations on the adoption of the agenda. I am pleased to report that these consultations have begun in a positive spirit. I remain confident that through these consultations and your flexibility, we would be able to formally adopt the agenda as soon as possible.

I have also been personally involved in overseeing the open-ended, inclusive and transparent informal consultations on the COP agenda item number 8: Green Climate Fund - Report of the Transitional Committee. Focused consultations are continuing under this item. We had two informal open-ended consultations that I have chaired. We then moved to a different setting which was chaired by the Ambassador at Large. Yesterday, the Presidency put out elements of a draft decision which was discussed by negotiators. I trust that I will be able to give you good news very soon.

In addition, the Presidency is conducting an Indaba on the way forward. The focus of the consultations is on the political issues that have not been fully addressed within the formal negotiating process. Discussions in the Indaba have been very constructive and delegates have had the opportunity to respond to and give feedback to bullet points and a graphic representation of the big picture. This discussion will continue tomorrow morning on Ministerial level.

I can report that consultations on various items under the COP are moving ahead. On the CMP, work is also continuing in a positive spirit on all fronts. Co-chairs are actively engaged under each of the agenda items and the results of their work will be presented on Friday at the closing plenary of the CMP. CMP agenda items related to the clean development mechanism and joint implementation are moving well. The issues under these items can be resolved between now and Friday. Of course, decisions adopted under CDM and JI are linked to the resolution of the issue of the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol. However, this issue should not stop work advancing under the CMP.

Dear Colleagues, the Chairs of the four subsidiary bodies are here with us this evening and I would like to take this opportunity to invite them to give us an update on their work.

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation held their closing meetings on Saturday, 3 December. Many items were successfully concluded in the discussions under the subsidiary bodies. Four items were referred to the COP and the CMP for further consideration and finalization. I invited the Chairs to undertake consultations on these specific items and asked them to resolve this as soon as possible.

Ministerial-level representatives from all over the world are already in Durban. Starting tomorrow, we should capitalise on their presence here, to provide the necessary political resolution to enable several key issues to advance.

To ensure this is done in an effective, open and transparent manner, I intend to convene an open ended Ministerial level Indaba from tomorrow onwards where Ministers will be called upon, through their collective wisdom, to find solutions for particular issues that need political resolution. I have called upon negotiators to make sure that they do their best to find solutions for technical problems so that the Ministers presence can be utilised to deal with the real and very hard political choices that need to be taken to ensure an outcome in Durban. I also intend to call upon fellow Ministers to play a facilitating role in finding resolutions on those areas that Ministers decide that such facilitation would be helpful. These Ministers will report back to the Indaba.

I am optimistic that we will move forward very quickly in the next two days. We will meet again to evaluate the progress we have made. I will continue to closely monitor the state of our discussions and propose further steps that might be required in order to reach our collective goals.

Colleagues, this brings us to the end of our informal stocktaking meeting. Before we adjourn this evening's meeting, I would like to inform you that I plan to conduct another informal stocktaking plenary on Thursday.

I thank you all very much for your support, your confidence in the South African Presidency, and your commitment to addressing this global challenge. I look forward to engaging with you all in the days ahead.