Delhi High Level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Transfer
New Delhi, 22 October 2009

Address by Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Ministers, ladies and gentlemen,

We meet here at a critical moment in time: in terms of real negotiating time, we are but five days away from the opening of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

This means that there is an urgent need to think in a focused way about the essentials of a deal and how they can be safeguarded in Copenhagen.

Just one month ago today, Secretary-General BAN Ki-moon convened a Summit on Climate Change in New York. The Summit ended with a loud call by world leaders to reach a comprehensive climate change deal at Copenhagen that ensures five essential components:

1. Enhanced action to assist the most vulnerable and the poorest in adapting to the impacts of climate change;

2. Ambitious emission reduction targets for all industrialized countries on an individual basis;

3. Nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries to limit the growth of their emissions, while safeguarding economic growth and sustainable development, with the necessary support;

4. Significantly scaled-up financial and technological resources; and

5. An equitable governance structure to guide financial resources.

These essential components need to be safeguarded in Copenhagen, possibly through an overarching decision, which could include a shared vision for long-term cooperative action. Such a decision would also need to launch a process and set a deadline for completing negotiations on a comprehensive outcome.

An overarching decision could be complemented by a set of decisions on key issues of implementation without delay. Issues that could be covered here include adaptation, technology, reducing emissions from deforestation and capacity-building.

For technology, a decision could include a new technology mechanism and a new technology body under the Convention that will unleash the full potential of technology. This would include concrete short-, medium- and long-term actions on technology development and transfer for both adaptation and mitigation.

For action now and up to 2012, prompt start-up funding, possibly in the order of USD 10 billion at Copenhagen, is needed. However, next to prompt start-up funding being available, the decision on technology would need to clarify a number of key issues in order to implement immediately the technology arrangements.

It needs to provide clarity on:

1. Who pays and how cost is shared;

2. What the funding will be used for. For example, will it be directed towards implementing already planned adaptation and mitigation actions? Or will it be directed to planning such actions, with a greater focus on capacity-building for this purpose?

3. How the funding will be channelled towards the desired result. Will institutional arrangements be centralized, decentralized, or will there be a mix of the two?

This is equally important for funding in the long term, which is the foundation for all other elements of strengthened climate change action.

It is important to achieve clarity on *how* increased funds will be generated. To ensure that funding in the long term can be increased proportionately with the scale of the problem, a Copenhagen decision needs to include a burden-sharing formula that can be used again and again going into the future.

For this, too, clarity is needed on:

1. Who pays and who pays which share;

2. What the funding will be used for;

3. How these funds will be channelled towards the needed actions.

Many countries have expressed frustration with the current architecture for climate finance, and many want to see real change in this area.

What is needed is a financial architecture that can effectively channel the required resources to where they need to go to implement the actions that Copenhagen agrees.

Guidance for the governance of institutional arrangements could include balanced representation of developing and developed countries; accountability; the reform of existing institutions and delivery mechanisms; or new institutions and delivery mechanisms.

This could entail a financial body or mechanism, but again, for it to work swiftly towards the desired climate result, clarity is needed on the following:

1. What the role of existing institutions will be, taking into consideration the amount of time needed to operationalize possible new institutions.

2. Likewise, what the role of new institutions will be, taking existing institutions into account.

3. Important also is the question of the authority that the COP will have over the operating entity/ies of the financial mechanism of the Convention. Also, how coherence and coordination in the financial architecture can be ensured.

4. What the nature of a financial body or mechanism be. Will it be a framework or a fund?

5. What its composition will look like. Will it only include a balanced representation of countries, or will it also include the representation of international financial institutions?

Lastly, what the concrete function of a financial body or mechanism will entail. For example, will it be engaged in needs assessments, resource allocation or other functions? Here it is important to take into account calls for simplified access, including direct access, as well as efficiency, effectiveness and the need to ensure that fiduciary standards are met.

Clearly, a step-change is needed in technology development and cooperation if the world wants to come to grips with climate change. Consequently, there needs to be urgent progress on the specifics of technology development and cooperation that can be included in the complementing technology decision. Support for a new technology mechanism under the Convention is emerging. Such a new technology mechanism needs to operate within the parameters of a clearly defined challenge.

If we are going to move the entire global economy from its current trajectory to one which is virtually carbon neutral in 100 years time, we must invest now in R&D, demonstration and deployment of (costly) innovative low-carbon technologies, and technology cooperation that builds the technology capacity of developing countries so that they can determine and create the low-emission and climate-resilient technologies that will be necessary for the decades ahead.

In my view, the technology action plan, the incentive mechanism and the cooperative R&D elements of the Copenhagen agreement need to have this long term perspective. They need to be linked directly with financial support and they need to be linked with any work towards the delivery of the long-term goal under the shared vision.

Progress made from recent negotiations in Bangkok clearly indicates that if we are going to make an effective arrangement on technology development and transfer for Copenhagen, clarity is needed on the following matters:

A mechanism for technology development and transfer under the UNFCCC that will enhance technology action to support developing countries to undertake their transition to low-emission, climate-resilient growth and development. The mechanism may comprise the following elements:

1. Institutional arrangements that will ensure the effective implementation of the mechanism, including incentive mechanisms for technology transfer, networks of national and regional technology innovation centres, technology development and transfer leveraging facility and technology hub and corps to address capacity-building needs of developing countries;

2. An international action plan on technology, and roadmaps encompassing short-, medium- and long-term cooperative actions among Parties that support the implementation of national actions by developing countries within the context of NAMAs and national adaptation plans;

3. Financial arrangements to support the implementation of the mechanism, including arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the effective implementation of the mechanism, and the measurement, reporting and verification of action and support.

To truly strengthen the response to climate change now, up to and beyond 2012, it is absolutely essential to identify how these arrangements can link into both National Adaptation Programmes of Action, as well as Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions.

In conclusion, technology is key to modern human development and is possibly the single greatest driver of national economic productivity and growth. Environmentally sound technologies are at the heart of dealing with climate change, and are likely to develop into one of the greatest economic drivers of green growth.

But the step-change in technology can only be achieved through an ambitious Copenhagen deal with a robust financing system and clarity on equitable governance structures.

There is no point in talking about technology in the abstract without a concise understanding of the necessary enabling structures. To arrive at a workable, action-oriented solution on technology, it is urgent that you advance both the technology arrangements, as well as financing and governance.

Unique only comes once. Copenhagen is an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss. But to profit from it to the full, you must be clear, you must be precise, you must be concise.

You only have one shot.

Thank you

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