



**United Nations Climate Change Conference
Bangkok, 5 April 2011**

**Opening address by Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Honourable Suwit Khunkitti, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Royal Thai Government,
Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Secretary, ESCAP,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

First, allow me to express my sincere sympathy and solidarity with the people and Government of Japan for the tragic losses and terrible devastation, and for the continued uncertainty that they face.

Let me also express my solidarity with the people of Thailand, who are currently suffering from unprecedented flooding and mudslides in the south of the country. Distinguished delegates, to express our heartfelt condolences to the victims and all those affected by these and other natural disasters, allow me to call on you to stand and observe a minute of silence.

My sincere thanks go to the Government of Thailand and to ESCAP for helping to organize this important session. I also thank those Parties that have made financial contributions to make these sessions possible, as well as those that I know will make contributions in the future.

Distinguished delegates, as we meet here to follow up on and advance our work, it is my hope that the atmosphere of cooperation and compromise that characterized the Cancun session prevails yet again. Because although the Cancun Agreements were a breakthrough for the *process*, much work and many political issues still need to be addressed before we have a breakthrough for the world's *climate*.

In Cancun, you agreed to advance work with clear deadlines – both for Parties and for the secretariat.

So allow me to update you on what the secretariat has already done to support the implementation of the Cancun Agreements.

On fast-start finance, the secretariat has issued a second notification reminding Parties of the 1 May deadline for the submission of information on this important issue.

We have recently received several submissions on response measures and I trust that these submissions and subsequent discussions at the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions of the subsidiary bodies will enable a decision in Durban on the modalities for the operationalization of the work programme and a possible forum.

The design phase for the Green Climate Fund will be particularly demanding and we will all need to make valiant efforts to ensure results by Durban. The regional groups are completing their nominations for the Transitional Committee, the first meeting of which has been scheduled to take place on 28 and 29 April. The secretariat is currently in the process of setting up the technical support unit that will support the work of the committee.

Work has also advanced on the Adaptation Committee, and the secretariat has issued a synthesis report on the submissions received on possible modalities and procedures for it.

The workshop on operationalizing the Technology Mechanism successfully concluded this morning and saw constructive substantive discussions.

On mitigation, the secretariat has issued the two INF documents that you took note of in Cancun.

The first round of the mitigation workshops has just been held. I note the constructive discussions and am convinced that the emerging clarity will assist you in building the global mitigation framework.

In this context, as you will recall, both the COP and the CMP took note of developed countries' economy-wide emission reduction targets. We are currently preparing the technical paper on these targets, which will be issued by the June session.

The secretariat is starting to prepare a simple prototype of the registry, which will be transformed into a fully functional registry as clarity on the actual needs emerges from your deliberations. At the same time, the modalities and key linkages of the registry need to be taken forward in 2011.

For MRV, significant progress in the development of modalities and guidelines for enhanced reporting on mitigation and support needs to be made this year.

The secretariat has begun contacting experts for the review on land use, land-use change and forestry. May I urge Parties to provide the outstanding submissions so that the secretariat can complete the preparations for the review, which needs to take place before the end of May 2011.

Distinguished delegates, this session gives you a first opportunity to do your share to take these more practical issues forward. But for Durban to be a success, the unanswered political questions need to be addressed – most importantly, the level of ambition and the legal nature of mitigation commitments after 2012.

Some progress was made in Cancun on Annex I mitigation in the context of the Kyoto Protocol. At the same time, Parties resolved to consider legal options with the aim of completing an agreed outcome based on the Bali Action Plan.

Many Parties want targets for Annex I Parties to be inscribed in an amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, while others have stated that they will not participate in a second commitment period.

It is essential that Parties find a way forward on this issue, which is particularly pressing given the growing possibility of a gap after 2012.

Ladies and gentlemen, taking forward the Cancun deliverables with a view to a successful conference in Durban means that your work will need to be carefully organized this year.

In organizing this work, care needs to be taken that the Cancun mandates are fulfilled within the agreed timelines, and that less-developed elements can catch up.

Let me conclude by reminding us that the full implementation of the Cancun Agreements can only become an important step forward for the climate if there is a responsible and clear way ahead on the Kyoto Protocol.

For its part, the secretariat will continue to support your increased efforts to address climate change. And we will of course support the incoming South African Presidency in every possible way and will assist in strengthening coordination in order to facilitate progress.

Thank you.

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