

COP18 OPENING PLENARY

JOINT OPENING STATEMENT ON THE OPENING PLENARY SESSION OF 18TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Delivered by _____, Doha, November 26, 2012

Mr President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of : Argentina, Philippines, India, China, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, Dominica, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Venezuela, El Salvador, and Democratic Republic of Congo.

The above Parties fully associate themselves with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We express our profound gratitude to the government and people of Qatar for their warm welcome to all of us here in this beautiful city of Doha.

Mr President,

Developing countries have long been at the frontlines of climate change and bearing the brunt of its impacts on their sustainable development prospects and even, in many cases, physical survival and territorial integrity. These underscore the need for global cooperation and action on climate change.

The 18th meeting of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties at Doha represents an important milestone for parties to strengthen the multilateral climate regime and enhance our collective ability to address climate change under the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities.

Mr President,

The Doha COP is taking place in the backdrop of the Durban conference last year, where parties were able to take a set of fairly ambitious and comprehensive

decisions. The decisions taken in Durban need to be seen as a delicately balanced 'package' built around 'mutual reassurances' by parties. As we commence our deliberations here in Doha, we must be mindful that this carefully balanced package must not be unraveled.

Doha is the opportunity to put the decisions taken in Durban into practice. After all, a decision is only as good as its implementation. Doha therefore must earn its place in history as the COP that was able to ensure the implementation of the decisions of the Durban conference and successfully conclude much of the ongoing work of the past many years. This would certainly be a significant contribution to the global fight against Climate Change.

The work of the Doha COP must be guided by certain overarching principles.

First, we must fully respect the high level political consensus reached by the leaders in Rio+20 that reaffirmed that Parties to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol should protect the climate system on the basis of equity and in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Second, we must seek to preserve and build on the architecture of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol as has been developed over almost two decades. We must act against the unraveling of the international climate change architecture into a weaker regime based entirely on political expediency.

Third, our actions must be anchored on a deep sense of urgency. The need for urgent action on climate change is clear, particularly in the pre-2020 period. Developing countries and countries that are most vulnerable to Climate Change cannot afford to wait.

Fourth, COP18 at Doha must result in an ambitious, equitable and comprehensive agreed outcome in line with the Bali Road Map. These outcomes should be based on science, equity, the right to development and common but differentiated responsibilities.

One of the key elements of the Durban package is the understanding that the work under the KP and LCA working groups would be comprehensively resolved at Doha. Moreover, the work of the Durban Platform is also not taking place in a vacuum and has to necessarily build on the work of KP and LCA. Therefore, a meaningful and comprehensive outcome in the KP and LCA tracks is the first and necessary element of a successful Doha outcome.

Our work in Doha must ensure that Annex I parties take on ambitious and legally binding mitigation commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, that parties achieve the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention in accordance with the Bali Action Plan, and that the ambition gaps on mitigation and means of implementation are closed prior to 2015 to ensure the highest level of effort by all Parties. These would then provide a sound basis for the Durban Platform negotiations towards a new protocol, legal instrument or agreed outcome for legal force under the Convention.

Fifth, the work under all the negotiating tracks in Doha should be undertaken in the full understanding that commitments under the Convention and Kyoto Protocol should be complied with under the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, and that the exception for non-compliance may be applicable as a future basis for action in the event that there are commitments that have not been complied with.

Mr. President,

Let me summarize our key expectations from the various elements of the work here in Doha:

Under the KP, we must establish an ambitious and ratifiable legally binding second commitment period which must enter into force as on January 01, 2013.

Under the LCA, an ambitious agreed outcome under the Bali Action Plan that comprehensively addresses all the elements of the Bali Action Plan, including

comparable mitigation efforts by Annex I non-Kyoto Parties, clear commitments for finance for 2013 and through to 2020 and successful conclusion of work on adaptation, technology transfer and capacity building. We also need progress on all unresolved issues including equitable access to sustainable development, technology related IPR and unilateral measures. We must agree to transfer the issues that we are not able to conclude in this session to the appropriate bodies of the Convention in order to bring to a close the AWG-LCA.

Under the Durban Platform, we need greater clarity on the scope of work and a clear acceptance by all parties that all Convention principles continue to apply to both its work-streams. We must continue our discussions on the various elements on the Durban Platform in a flexible and constructive format in order to build trust and understanding which would enable us to plan its work in accordance with decision 1/CP.17. We also feel that we need not prioritize one work-stream over the other under the DP; both should be pursued in a balanced manner.

In closing, let me assure you, Mr President, on behalf of the countries associated with this statement, of our full support for your Presidency, and our continued commitment to engage fully and constructively with all of our partners in order for us to arrive at an ambitious and equitable outcome at COP18.

Thank you, Mr. President.
