

## Bonn Workshop on EASD, 16 May 2012

Mr Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Equity was an important element of the discussions held in Durban when we agreed on the package of decisions that we arrived at. This was a result of the extensive and prolonged consultations held by the Presidency with the parties following the introduction of an agenda item on 'equity' in the agenda of CoP 17. This understanding amongst parties was finally reflected in the decision of the AWG-LCA. Durban decisions have, therefore, expanded the scope of discussions on equity.

I will deal with this issue from this perspective and argue that, in the context of climate change, equity question is wider than that of sustainable development. Sustainable development is only the immediate context of our discussions. But, equity has other dimensions and, in that sense, is a wider concept.

Equity, in the wider sense, has both ethical as well as scientific attributes. In terms of ethics, it is a measure of fairness. In scientific terms, it fixes responsibilities and capacities. For defining them and discovering full attributes of equity, we should go back to the Convention.

Article 3.1 of the Convention talks of equity. It enjoins all parties to protect the climate system on the basis of equity. The term itself is not defined in the Convention. But, it is perhaps because the Convention writers thought of equity to be so self-evident and self-explanatory that they did not consider it necessary to define it.

But, there are **practical examples** in the Convention, of how equity can be achieved:-

- ✓ The preamble of the Convention talks of the largest share of emissions originating in developed countries or the principle of historical responsibilities as we know;
- ✓ It talks further of the share of global emissions originating in developing countries rising to meet their social and development needs;
- ✓ Art 3.4 admits that 'economic development is essential for adopting measures to address climate change';
- ✓ It says that the developed countries will to take the lead in combating climate change;

- ✓ Last, but not the least, differentiated commitments are recognized under Article 4 as manifestations of Equity.

Equity is therefore a **cornerstone** of the Convention. And, it was one of the reasons why we had such a spirited discussion on equity in Durban.

In this background, let me test some of the impressions that have gathered after Durban.

One of the impressions going around is that Equity is an impediment to raising or reaching higher ambition for mitigation. Often our call for respect for Equity in negotiations is seen as hesitation to act. We would like to emphatically dispel this notion. As we see it, **Equity is only not an impediment to ambition; in fact, it is a key enabler of actions by all parties.**

Second notion is that Equity is opposed to sustainability. That sustainability will be compromised if equity is achieved. We are conscious that equity is not a right to pollute. But it is a legitimate right that ensures sustainable development and survival for the millions in developing countries who are most vulnerable to Climate Change. Equity would be achieved if it respects the **right to development** and the imperative of **poverty eradication** of developing countries. The Right to Development is a key element of what Equity seeks to articulate.

In this sense, we do not see equity as opposed to sustainability or survival. There is no doubt a discussion required on the appropriate formulation of equity. But, before we go towards an indicative approach to defining equity, we first need to agree on the broad paradigm or the framework for equity.

Third, equity is **not just linked to mitigation**. It permeates **all aspects** of elements under negotiation. Aspects such as finance, technology transfer, adaptation etc all need to be infused with Equity.

Considering this, we need to approach the issue of three specific contexts.

First is the context of shared vision under the AWG-LCA. When we talk of **Shared Vision for a time frame for global** peaking and a long term global goal for emissions reductions, there are contextual considerations which have to be recognized in order to define and achieve these goals in an equitable manner. The experts have presented their views earlier in this session. We need to continue this discussion in order to

advance our understanding and come to an agreed conclusion. Before we come to a normative or indicator-based definition of equity, we need to define the paradigm. Is it effort sharing or is it resource sharing? What kind of sharing are we talking about. This should precede our discussions on trajectories of growth of emissions in the context of assumed stabilisation levels.

**Second context is that of the Durban Platform.** One of the notions generated after Durban is that, there will be no equity in the post 2020 arrangements and that they have to apply to all parties universally and equally. This simply does not stand to reason. Since we have agreed that we are not negotiating a new Convention under the Durban Platform, the principles of equity will have to apply fully and comprehensively to this process. We need to undertake a thorough discussion of the principles on which DP would be based. We can ensure equity under the Durban Platform by agreeing **not to entertain any proposal that is iniquitous**. Equity under such arrangements should apply not only to the nature of actions but also the conditions for enablement.

**The third context is provided by the decision of parties to raise ambition in the short-term** i.e. the pre-2020 period. In the context of short-term ambition, scientific assessments on the basis of science are available. These are provided by AR-4 of IPCC. If fully implemented, actions based on this assessment would achieve significant results for ambition. Developing countries have already started taking ambitious actions in this light. This is an important measure of equity and is relevant for the near-term ambition.

Lastly, Mr Chair, We will do justice to the issue if this workshop in Bonn is not as **an end in itself**. It should add to our collective understanding and its articulation with respect to peaking and global goal so that we could have a meaningful discussion under Shared Vision in the run-up to Doha. The discussions in the Equity workshop in Bonn should be fed into the negotiations and additional workshops should also be organized in the Bangkok session. Moreover, there should be full work-plans on Equity both under AWG-LCA as well as under the Durban Platform.

Thank you.

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