

Remarks by COP17/CMP7 Ambassador at Large, Ms Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko

Her Excellency, Ms Yoo, Young Sook, Minister of Environment of the Republic Korea,

His Excellency Mr Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, President Designate of COP18/CMP8

Your Excellencies, Ministers and Deputy Ministers

Madam Executive Secretary, Christiana Figueres

Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, I would like to thank the Republic of Korea and the State of Qatar for hosting this important meeting which gives us the opportunity and political platform to find common ground. The topic of this meeting “Meet the Challenge, Make the Change – Moving Forward with a balanced Perspective” captures the essence of where we are currently in the negotiations as we prepare for COP18/CMP8 in Qatar.

Over the past two years a lot of work has gone into ensuring that mutual trust and transparency in the multilateral process is restored, and going to Doha we must ensure that this continues. Reassuring each other of our individual and collective political will to honour existing commitments, while working towards enhanced action, is the key to our success.

The package of decisions we agreed to in Durban, constitutes a delicate agreement which we need to implement in Doha. Ministers must instruct negotiators to honour the Durban package of decisions to ensure that it is not reopened and unravelled. It is on the basis of the Durban outcome that we need to move forward in COP18/CMP8. Doha must be all about the implementation of the already agreed decisions.

It became very clear, at the different negotiating sessions and informal consultations throughout this year, especially in Bangkok, that the work of the three AWGs are interlinked. This reality has implications for our strategy to move negotiations forward.

We need to start with the KP by adopting the amendment to Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol, which will establish the second commitment period. In order to achieve this, we need to agree on a workable length of the second commitment period, the accounting rules, as well as limited consequential amendments.

Ministers will have to instruct the negotiators to find a balanced solution to the questions of eligibility of those KP Parties not signing up to a second commitment period to participate in the KP flexible mechanisms, of how to deal with the assigned amount units (AAUs) and of increasing current low levels of emission reduction commitments. Without this leadership, the KP negotiations will not succeed.

The AWG-LCA must round up its work by moving from the negotiation phase to implementation of all outstanding matters from Bali and Cancun and thus honour the decisions taken in Durban. It might be helpful to recall that the very nature of the climate change challenge is such that there will never be final closure on any issue in the negotiations. What is required from us, is to move from the negotiation phase to implementation phase, in order to effectively address the ever evolving and changing climate challenge for which new solutions will have to be found continuously.

While we can expect that there might still be some outstanding matters, Ministers need to put their heads together and decide how to deal with these issues. For example, we have created a number of key institutions to enhance provision of the means of implementation. We need to effectively operationalise these institutions and ensure that they can deliver on their mandates. Predictable and sustainable support to developing countries must be made available. Scaled up financial support is critical to implement the decisions taken in the AWG-LCA. In this regard, we look forward to the report and recommendations of the chairs of the discussions on long-term finance and hope that these recommendations would be bold enough to take us to the next level. Without high level political commitment towards the issue of finance, the negotiations will be troubled.

You will recall that in Durban we agreed that the current level of ambition – not only regarding mitigation and adaptation, but also the means of implementation – needs to be raised. In this regard the ADP needs to elaborate a plan of work to enhance ambition, to identify and explore options for a range of actions that can close the ambition gap with a view to ensuring the highest possible mitigation, adaptation actions, supported by the necessary means, by all Parties to UNFCCC. The political will is now required from Ministers in order for the ADP to get down to business.

On behalf of South Africa, both as the outgoing Presidency and as a Party to the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, I would like to take this opportunity to once again pledge our support to Qatar. I call on all Parties to give the President of COP18/CMP8 the same support and cooperation that they extended to us in Durban.

In conclusion, Ministers and Colleagues, the argument has been made that the socio-economic conditions today are different to those that were prevailing in 1992 and 1997 when the Convention and the Protocol were adopted. That the negotiations should take into consideration the economic development and climate integrity in the way forward is a reality. It is also a reality that the global nature of climate change is such that only a global response can truly meet the challenges posed by climate change. There can be no doubt that we are all bound together by the threat of our changing climate. Ministers now again have the opportunity to stand together and show the political will so desperately needed to meet the climate change challenge and move us forward.

Thank you.