

Climate Change negotiators in Bangkok need strong political backing

Bangkok, Thailand (PANA) - As the two-week United Nations climate change talks in Bangkok, Thailand, entered its second week Monday, world leaders have been urged to provide a strong political backing in order to make a significant step towards an ambitious treaty expected to be clinched in December.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) noted Monday that while delegates negotiating the new climate treaty in Bangkok made some progress during the first week, which could help prevent devastating impacts of global warming, they needed a stronger political backing from their leaders at home.

"We have seen negotiation in good faith here in Bangkok and steps forward on technical issues. But in order to boost this slow progress ahead of Copenhagen we need strong political backing and firm declarations from leaders," Kim Carstensen, leader of the WWF Global Climate Initiative, said.

"We are calling on world leaders to gather for a summit to unlock the negotiations and give them a strong political impetus ahead of Copenhagen conference," Carstensen added.

She said leaders should make it clear that the outcome of Copenhagen must have a legally binding character and include negotiated emissions reduction targets for the rich countries, adding: "Leaders must instruct negotiators that a robust outcome of Copenhagen means clear and agreed reduction targets and financial commitments. A set of voluntary pledges will not do the trick."

The Bangkok meeting is part of a series of five major negotiating sessions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) leading up to the Copenhagen conference in Denmark in December at which text is being prepared.

Countries agreed in 2007 to launch a two-year negotiating process to culminate in an ambitious and effective international climate change deal at the end of 2009.

The existing legally-binding agreement which governs carbon emissions - the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012 - and an ambitious new deal needs to be agreed in December to give national governments time to prepare for implementation beyond 2012.

A Copenhagen deal is said to be essential to the global transition into green economic growth and, most urgently, to help the world, especially the most vulnerable, adapt to impacts that are now inevitable.

About 4,000 delegates, including government delegates from 177 countries, representatives from business and industry, environmental organisations and research institutions, are attending the Bangkok talks.

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