



World Vision urges developed countries to commit to emissions reduction

Bangkok, Thailand (PANA) - International charitable organisation 'World Vision' Tuesday joined several non-governmental organisations at the UN climate change negotiations in Bangkok, Thailand, to call on developed countries to commit to serious emission reductions and significant public financing for adaptation and mitigation in developing countries, in addition to current aid pledges.

"To reach a global agreement in Copenhagen (Denmark), developing countries need to see more ambitious emissions reduction targets and pledges on adaptation finance by wealthy nations, and they need reasons to be confident that those promises will be kept," World Vision chief economist and climate change policy director Brett Parris said.

Developed countries, which are said to be responsible for the current high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, must agree to the mid-term emission reduction targets that scientific community has set out as a beacon, in the range of minus 25 and minus 40 percent over 1990 levels, by 2020.

On the other hand, developing countries are asked only to limit the growth of their emissions in line with their sustainable development needs and only if supported through finance and technology from developed countries.

A new World Vision report on Disaster Risk Reduction launched here Tuesday is calling on developed countries to honour existing pledges and commit to significant new funding.

The report, which shows solutions that are already working, warns that international humanitarian agencies are being stretched to respond to the "alarming rise in climate-related disasters."

"As natural disasters have increased, we have seen a corresponding increase in our expenditure on emergency responses. In 1998, 15 percent of World Vision's overall expenditure was spent on relief activities. Ten years later it accounted for 35 percent," Richard Rumsey, World Vision's director of disaster risk reduction and community resilience, said Tuesday.

"Developed countries must commit significant funds to disaster risk reduction in poor and vulnerable communities, or the effects of climate change will cut a swath through decades of development gains," he added.

Rumsey said the typhoons and floods that have devastated parts of Asia were a "60-day wake up call" to world leaders convening in Copenhagen in December to devise a global strategy addressing climate change.

In the past week, the world has witnessed how vulnerable poor families in Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand and India are bearing the brunt of climate change.

"They will also suffer most from inadequate action on climate change by leaders of wealthy nations," Rumsey said.

The two-week Bangkok meeting ending on Friday is part of a series of the UN round of negotiations being held ahead of the climate change conference in Copenhagen in December, at which a comprehensive international climate change deal is expected to be sealed.

Bangkok - 06/10/2009