

**UNFCCC Press Briefing, UN Climate Change Conference,
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The Kyoto Protocol discussions got off to a very good start and have made a very interesting shift this week in the sense that they have shifted from discussing not just the WHAT but actually the HOW under the Kyoto Protocol.

There is a very strong desire to protect and build on the Kyoto Protocol rulebook, which is, as you know, currently the only international set of accounting rules that protect the environmental integrity of mitigation efforts of countries around the world.

There's also an expressed desire to find a political solution this year. It's interesting that this week it was pretty clear that there is no country that is fundamentally opposed to a second commitment period.

Whether they individually participate in it or not is a different issue, but there is no country fundamentally opposed to a second commitment period. So that clarity that was gained this week could perhaps open up some doors for further work in June.

As you know we work under two tracks at the same time, under the Kyoto Protocol and under the Convention. Under the Convention, which here is called the LCA, there has been several days of honest, very straightforward talk among countries on what is the task ahead.

Perhaps some of the media have reported this as a discussion about the agenda of this meeting - that is a misnomer. This discussion has actually been about what the scope of its work going to be, and certainly, what is the scope of the expected outcome in Durban. So it has been a very, very important discussion, not surprising that Parties are still in that heated discussion.

What is very clear is that developing countries recognize that Cancun was a major and very important step forward, but that that does not solve the problem, and they would like to keep all of the other issues that are incorporated in the Bali Action Plan on the table.

The developed countries have expressed a preference for focusing on the very specific issues that were agreed to in Cancun and begin to make progress there.

So the discussion has actually been very healthy, with the inevitable conclusion I'm expecting out of this, that Parties will realize that both of these things are important, that they need to find a way in which they can both focus on the very specific items that come out of Cancun, as well as at the same time keep all of the other issues that were not resolved, or not agreed, or where no decision was made in Cancun - keep all of those on the table. And that is the kind of broad,

overreaching agenda of work that I think is going to be necessary for the Parties to agree to.

I must confess I wish they had done this process faster, but so be it. They have taken the time that they needed. What it does mean, however, is that they're going to have to take this increased understanding that they've been able to achieve here through these conversations in Bangkok in order to focus the work of the rest of the year.

It also means that they will have to optimize the use of every opportunity that they will have throughout the year to advance the work; that means using other opportunities, other venues, perhaps some informal workshops, all kinds of tools and opportunities that they will have to work with each other in order to advance the work and be able to come to Durban with a solid basis for agreements.

I would like to conclude by just emphasizing that yes, the negotiations, the discussions, the conversations under the umbrella of the United Nations are complicated and very complex, as we have seen here this week, but they're absolutely critical.

There is no other venue that allows for every single country to participate - one country, one voice; there is no other venue that includes, in particular, the most vulnerable countries, which need to be

at the table where the programme of work is being discussed; and there certainly is no other venue that is structured and authorized to make decisions on climate change.

There are many other venues in which Parties can DISCUSS issues which have to do with their work programme here, but it is only under the United Nations that Parties can get together and MAKE DECISIONS that have to do with climate change. And those decisions that are taken here at the international level can then be taken to the domestic level and be then complemented by domestic policy in order to make them effective.