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PRESS RELEASE

Governments focus on concrete solutions to build new global climate agreement and drive greater climate action

(Bonn, 3 May 2013) – The second session of the international negotiation to build a new global climate agreement and drive greater immediate climate action ended on Friday after a week in which governments focused on concrete solutions.

“Countries discussed concrete solutions to speed up and scale up action. They discussed how to construct a transparent, measurable, verifiable agreement that gets the best out of all countries. And they are committed to sticking to their own timetable,” said Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The task of the UNFCCC’s “Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action” (ADP) is to negotiate a new, universal climate agreement by 2015, to come into force from 2020, and to find ways to increase current inadequate global ambition to address human-generated climate change before 2020.

Ms. Figueres pointed out that the discussions during the group’s second session (ADP 2) took place against an increasingly strong and diverse global effort.

“National climate legislation is increasing by leaps and bounds, business investment in clean energy and climate-resilient networks reaches repeated records, and the past three years of negotiations have delivered decisions and institutions that provide a foundation for an adequate global response,” she said.

“Nations are focusing now on the practical aspects of how this global response will both lead and support bigger, faster national and private action,” she said.

ADP Co-Chairs Jayant Moreshever Mauskar and Harald Dovland said in a joint statement: “We have had a rich discussion this week. We believe that we are working in a more focused mode with clear and precise inputs coming from all. We are heartened by that and believe we are making progress. But we have limited time to have a draft negotiating text ready and available in less than two years from now, and therefore need to continue and accelerate our efforts. In particular, we need to utilize the two weeks we have in June to go to the next level of discussion.”



Ms. Figueres reminded governments during the meeting that while they are on track to meet the milestones they have set themselves, they are not yet on track to meet the demands of science.

Global atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations will soon pass the 400 parts per million threshold – a dangerously high level – so little time remains to take concerted action in order to prevent global average temperatures rising over 2 degrees Celsius, beyond which climate impacts become even more serious.

Areas of agreement

At the ADP 2 meeting, governments converged on the need to construct an innovative set of ways for all countries to commit to climate actions that are compatible with their national circumstances; that the contours of the new agreement must integrate action across all levels (international, national, sub-national and private sector); and that a mechanism must be created to regularly ratchet up ambition to stay below a 2 degrees Celsius temperature rise.

There was also convergence amongst governments that there are many existing opportunities to scale up existing mitigation actions, notably with the help of renewable energy; that low-emission and high resilience development requires cooperation across government ministries; and that there is a need to build up sufficient financial means to implement action.

Finally, there was general agreement that all key external stakeholders must be involved in constructing solutions and that strengthened support from the highest political levels is required.

To increase civil society and external stakeholder involvement, the ADP Co-Chairs heard proposals from observer organizations on the 2015 agreement and on pre-2020 ambition at a key question and answer session. Webcast and social media allowed virtual participation by stakeholders not attending the conference.

New tools push greater climate action

“We have launched many international mechanisms and institutions to incentivize countries, companies and citizens to take the strongest climate action they can. All have common objectives: to establish transparency, encourage empowerment and execute action at every level,” Ms. Figueres said.

She noted that this week’s launch of the new registry prototype for “Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions” is a prime example. Built by the UNFCCC secretariat on behalf of governments, the registry is a searchable database and clearing house of information that makes transparent the mitigation actions that developing countries are taking or planning to limit their greenhouse gas emissions and the available support from different sources for these actions.

“I am proud that the UNFCCC Secretariat has delivered this registry tool for Parties, which is designed specifically to empower developing countries and providers of support to identify greater partnership opportunities for mitigation. They can then implement greater action together,” she said.



Next meeting

The ADP will resume its work in four weeks in Bonn, in parallel with the sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) (03–14 June 2013). The Subsidiary Body meetings are designed to prepare decisions for adoption at the UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw (11–22 November 2013).

About the UNFCCC

With 195 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 192 of the UNFCCC Parties. For the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, 37 States, consisting of highly industrialized countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

See also: <<http://unfccc.int/press/items/2794.php>>

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