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## **Informal ministerial round table on a shared vision on long-term cooperative action**

**Note by the President-designate\***

### *Summary*

This paper was prepared by the President-designate of the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth session and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol at its fourth session to assist ministers and other heads of delegation participating in the round table on shared vision for long-term cooperative action scheduled for 11 December 2008. The purpose of the document is to help frame the debate by proposing a number of issues on which discussion might focus with the objective of facilitating an optimal outcome of the first ministerial debate on a shared vision for long-term cooperative action.

Issues proposed for discussion include the importance of and need for a comprehensive shared vision for long-term cooperative action vis-à-vis the challenges posed for mitigating and adapting to climate change and creating a suitable financial and technology support infrastructure to enable the necessary actions. As a guide to the discussions during the round table, ministers and other heads of delegation are presented herewith with questions which may assist them in focusing their interventions during the discussions and providing political impetus to the negotiations in 2009.

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\* This paper was submitted after the deadline owing to the need to undertake informal consultations.

## I. Introduction

1. The Bali Action Plan (decision 1/CP.13) launched a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012. The objective of this process is for Parties to reach an agreed outcome at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) in Copenhagen by addressing, inter alia, “a shared vision for long-term cooperative action, including a long-term goal for emission reductions, to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention”. The Bali Action Plan thereby gives the development of a shared vision the clear purpose of making the achievement of the ultimate objective possible. This is to be achieved “in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, taking into account social and economic conditions and other relevant factors”.
2. The development of such a shared vision will be one of the central issues at COP 14 in Poznan. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) will consider shared vision for long-term cooperative action at an in-session workshop, on which the Chair of the AWG-LCA will prepare a summary, and will consider the assembly by the chair of ideas and proposals in a contact group. Furthermore, the President-designate has taken the initiative to convene an informal round table on a shared vision for long-term cooperative action during the High-Level Segment on 11 December 2008.
3. This round table will provide ministers and other heads of delegation with an interactive setting to discuss and come to a common understanding of what could be some key elements of a shared vision for cooperative action. Reaching this common understanding will be crucial in setting a positive tone for the final negotiations in 2009.
4. As a first step, ministers and other heads of delegation could identify some initial elements of the vision that are shared, and build consensus around these. This in itself will provide political direction to the negotiations in 2009.

## II. Background

### **The importance of a shared vision for long-term cooperative action**

5. Throughout the years the international community has developed an ever stronger, shared vision of the magnitude of the problem of climate change. A universally shared vision of the magnitude of the solution, however, remains elusive. Nearly two decades after the launch of the international climate change process, there remain many different conceptions of how the international community can successfully work together to achieve the objectives contained in Article 2 of the Convention. Countries do not as yet, for example, have a common vision on the scale of actions necessary to respond to the imperatives of science or on the contributions of different groups of countries to these actions, nor on a common vision on the architecture that will deliver on finance, technology and capacity-building and on the reporting of actions and support for such actions. In other words, the countries of the world have set themselves a common goal (Article 2 of the Convention) but lack a plan that outlines how their actions can be coordinated to reach that goal.
6. Clarity on how countries intend to cooperate in order to develop and implement solutions on a scale required to achieve the overall objective of the Convention is crucial to reaching an agreed outcome at COP 15.

### **III. Approach**

#### **A. The need for a broad scope**

7. For a shared vision for long-term cooperative action to be comprehensive it needs to have a broad scope and should describe how developed and developing countries will work together to reach the ultimate objective of the Convention by:
- (a) Setting a long-term goal for global emission reductions;
  - (b) Undertaking measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation commitments or actions for the midterm linked to the overall long-term goal;
  - (c) Supporting mitigation and adaptation actions through finance and cooperation on technology development, dissemination and transfer;
  - (d) Implementing adaptation actions;
  - (e) Building capacity;
  - (f) Taking into account economic and social consequences of response measures;
  - (g) Boosting economic diversification to build resilience.

#### **B. Arriving at a shared vision: key issues**

8. To arrive at a comprehensive shared vision for long-term cooperative action a number of key issues need to be addressed. As a guide to the discussions during the round table, ministers and other heads of delegation may wish to focus their interventions on the following questions.

##### 1. The mitigation challenge

9. The Bali Action Plan articulates the shared vision that action on mitigation will be enhanced through nationally appropriate mitigation actions by all Parties and nationally appropriate mitigation commitments by all developed country Parties, ensuring comparability of effort among the latter. Mitigation action by developing countries will be supported and enabled by technology, finance and capacity-building. Actions and support to actions will be measurable, reportable and verifiable. The effectiveness of cooperative action on mitigation needs to be greatly enhanced by putting the provisions of the Bali Action Plan into operation. Policies and mechanisms designed to unlock the potential of existing technologies and further develop new technologies need to be put in place. Measurement, reporting and verification frameworks need to be developed, the cost-effectiveness of mitigation actions enhanced and the potential of sector-specific actions - and impacts captured. The long-term global goal for emission reductions will need to be set based on the best available science, and the pathway to reaching this goal determined through the identification of the point in time when global emissions need to stop growing and start declining, establishment of mid-term goals for emission reductions by developed country Parties, all of this based on recognition of the imperatives of science, sound understanding of the mitigation potential of policies, technologies and mechanisms and in full accordance with the objective and principles of the Convention.

##### *Question 1*

10. How, as part of a balanced outcome at COP 15, can industrialized countries specify quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives and how can developing countries state their efforts to undertake and implement nationally appropriate mitigation actions, enabled by an agreed set of supporting elements?

*Question 2*

11. What strategic cooperative actions would be most effective in supporting measurable, reportable and verifiable actions by developing countries while allowing their sustainable economic development to accelerate?

2. The adaptation challenge

12. The impacts of climate change are already evident and are in particular affecting the most vulnerable countries of the world. Adaptation has become a necessity and for some countries it is even a matter of survival. The costs of coping with climate change and making adjustments are already significant and are expected to rise in the near future. One of the key objectives of the Bali Action Plan is to enable climate-resilient development and to reduce vulnerability of all Parties, in particular the poorest ones that will be hit the hardest.

*Question 3*

13. How can countries, especially the most vulnerable, be assisted in preparing themselves for unavoidable climate change? How can resilience be built and economic diversification accelerated? How can vulnerable regions assess risk, put in place risk management and risk reduction strategies? How can scaled-up international cooperation and support be provided to assist in the urgent implementation of adaptation actions?

3. The challenge of creating an effective support system

14. An effective response to the climate change challenge requires a stronger financial and technology support infrastructure to enable the necessary actions in the areas of mitigation, adaptation and technology. Such a response also requires actions at all levels – local, national and international. It requires defining the role of international cooperation and deciding what should be done to promote lifestyles that lead to low-carbon development paths. Various steps need to be taken to put in place a suitable set of mechanisms that will spur green growth globally on an unprecedented scale and assist developing countries to cope with the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

15. One of the crucial issues on which to focus is the design of a clever financial architecture that will generate adequate additional resources for mitigation, adaptation, technology and capacity-building.

*Question 4*

16. What role should the UNFCCC process play in enhancing international technology cooperation? How to promote more focused action-oriented regional and international technology cooperation programmes and initiatives to accelerate the deployment, diffusion and transfer of technologies?

*Question 5*

17. What are the most promising approaches for generating measurable, reportable and verifiable financial resources?
- (a) What needs to be funded?
  - (b) How can new and additional funds be generated? (On the basis of voluntary contributions by industrialized countries; through assessed contributions; by reserving a portion of assigned amount units 'upfront'; through levies on instruments or mechanisms that are created or continued through the outcome at COP 15?)

4. The challenge of governance

18. Another important issue for discussion is the governance of the resources. An agreed outcome at COP 15 will also need to deliver on "enhanced action on the provision of financial resources". The institutional framework that should be put in place that 'holds everything together' and corresponding delivery systems would be key components of this discussion in the light of current institutional arrangements and disbursement. The Global Environment Facility (GEF), which plays a central role in the financial mechanisms under the Convention, stems from an era in which environmental problems and responses to these were understood in a different context. Two aspects that present challenges are: the dual responsibility of the GEF secretariat (to the GEF Council and to the COP) and the concept of 'implementing agencies' rendering direct access difficult.

*Question 6*

19. What type of institutional framework will be required?
- (a) How can existing institutional arrangements be improved to avoid proliferation of institutions and funds;
  - (b) What new institutional arrangements can be established to provide new and additional financial resources and investment;
  - (c) What would be the nature of governance structures;
  - (d) How should financial support provided through different bilateral and multilateral channels be deployed for measurable, reportable, verifiable action and nationally approved adaptation strategies.

**C. Capturing common ground**

20. The round table in Poznan will present ministers and other heads of delegation with a first opportunity to give a strong political signal as to their shared vision on their joint cooperation. The outcome of this discussion can make a strong contribution to advance negotiations towards an agreed outcome at COP 15 in Copenhagen.

21. The main issues raised during the round table discussion will be reflected in a Chair's summary to be issued under the responsibility of the President. The COP, in its decision resulting from the stocktaking of the progress made since COP 13 in Bali, could take note of this summary. Any elements of the shared vision which enjoy general support could also be included in such a decision.