



Co-chairs' summary of the Presidencies consultation on the way forward

28-29 January 2021

We were very encouraged by the keen interest and active engagement during the first of our monthly series of multilateral consultations held on 28 & 29 January 2021. The views expressed reiterated Parties' commitment to advancing work this year and to ensuring maximum progress ahead of COP 26, despite the continued challenging circumstances resulting from the global health pandemic.

We were also encouraged by the overwhelming support for our proposed multi-layered mode of work which will include: engagement at the level of Ministers led by the incoming COP 26 President; monthly consultations with Group Chairs and Heads of Delegation led by us, the lead negotiators of the Presidencies, complemented by ongoing bilateral engagement, and; consultations and technical work led by the Subsidiary Body Chairs. This will of course be supplemented by the continued advice, technical expertise, and mandated work of the constituted bodies. As we indicated during the consultations, the spirit in which we intend to approach work this year will be guided by the three shining stars of progress, transparency and inclusivity, bolstered by our partnership and solidarity towards a common goal.

In reflecting on the work achieved in 2020, Parties expressed appreciation to the Presiding Officers for undertaking the June Momentum for Climate Change and the UN Climate Dialogues, and for the way that feedback had been taken on board through the year. Parties noted that these initiatives provided useful opportunities to exchange views, increased understanding among Parties, built trust and maintained momentum in the process. Parties also acknowledged the initiative of the secretariat to launch Climate Hub 360, the online calendar of events that provides the roadmap towards an ambitious outcome at COP 26.

It was clear from the views expressed that while Parties acknowledged that a lot of work had been accomplished last year despite the circumstances, the pace of work this year needed to be accelerated to fulfil mandates and achieve ambitious outcomes at COP 26. However, it was also recognised that current circumstances meant that in-person meetings remained unlikely for some time.

With this understanding, Parties expressed willingness and highlighted the urgent need to explore alternative modes of work - including those being used in other multilateral processes - that could move us towards achieving our collective goal until such time that in-person meetings are safe and inclusive.

At the same time, some Parties expressed objections to formal decisions being made virtually in light of concerns regarding virtual working. The concerns included challenges experienced with virtual technology, time zone considerations, availability of interpretation in the six UN languages and challenges of coordinating within groups - all of which can negatively impact effective participation. These concerns were acknowledged by the Presiding Officers and the UNFCCC Executive Secretary who set out steps already taken to address them and reassured Parties of the secretariat's commitment to continue exploring solutions to overcome these challenges. We, and the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies, also expressed our commitment to continue working with the secretariat to learn from our previous experiences with the June Momentum and the UN Climate Dialogues.

With the understanding that solutions must be found to facilitate effective participation of all, and that alternative working arrangements would be for the purpose of advancing work in preparation for an in-

person session where formal decisions would be taken, Parties identified several ways to advance work including suggestions for how such work could be captured. Parties suggested using technical workshops, roundtables or dialogues and capturing the discussion in informal summaries. Parties also suggested encouraging open calls for submissions by Parties. Parties further suggested that the secretariat could prepare technical papers or that the Chairs could prepare textual proposals including possible bridging solutions. Parties also suggested that Chairs could consider using co-facilitators to help Parties engage on very specific technical issues.

During the consultations, Parties outlined many issues that need to be resolved in Glasgow. We noted consistent mention of the importance of finalizing the Paris Agreement work programme - Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, transparency, and common timeframes - and addressing finance, adaptation, loss and damage, mitigation and ambition. We also heard the importance of ensuring that all issues are addressed in a comprehensive and balanced manner while noting that issues may require different modes of work and/or different levels of engagement to be resolved.

In discussing the plans for the June session, the Executive Secretary provided a frank assessment of the current state of play in Germany and globally which made planning for an in-person session very challenging, including the fact that currently such large events were not allowed in Germany. Noting the views expressed by Parties during the consultations, the secretariat will therefore work closely with the Presiding Officers to explore how work could be undertaken in June that meets the criteria of advancing work while respecting the concerns expressed regarding decision-making outside of an in-person session. The Presiding Officers and the secretariat reassured Parties of their intention to maintain flexibility in their planning to respond to improvements in the global situation prior to Glasgow.

We look forward to meeting with you in this format monthly to accelerate progress on specific topics to be identified. We noted the concerns expressed regarding time zone challenges and we committed to rotating the times of these monthly consultations so that no region is consistently disadvantaged. In light of the priorities articulated by Parties, as indicated, the February and March consultations will explore ways to accelerate progress on adaptation and on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement respectively. Further details on these and future consultations will be communicated to National Focal Points and the Chairs/Coordinators of the negotiating groups. Information will also be made available on the [UNFCCC website](#).

We, the Presidency of COP 25 and the incoming-Presidency of COP 26, committed to continue to work closely with the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies, the UNFCCC secretariat, and Parties to develop our plans towards accelerating substantive work in the coming months to achieve an ambitious outcome in Glasgow. In so doing, we informed that we would continue to seek guidance from the Bureau at the appropriate time.