



**Tripartite briefing by the UN Secretary-General, the incoming Mexican President and UNFCCC to the permanent missions in New York
New York, 21 September 2010**

**Address by Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It's a pleasure for me to brief you on the state of play in the negotiations and expectations for the upcoming months. It is my hope that this briefing will assist you and your Governments in the preparations for the next negotiating session in Tianjin, China, one week from now, as well as for the climate change conference in Cancun, Mexico, at the end of the year.

That urgent progress is needed in the climate change negotiations is evident. Perhaps recent events best illustrate this:

Of course one cannot say with utmost scientific certainty that the floods in Pakistan that have affected more than 18 million people are a direct climate change impact. Nor can one say that about the recent floods in Niger, the wildfires in Russia, the mudslides in China or the tornado in Brooklyn. But if these events are anything to go by, then they give us a taste of the magnitude of what could come - and of what could come more frequently, and more intensely - if a global solution stays at the level of rhetoric.

To move forward purposefully, negotiations need to be grounded in realistic expectations and aim at achieving pragmatic action. Cancun is an opportunity to build on the various outcomes from Copenhagen with concrete actions, one step at a time.

As you know, the Ad hoc Working Groups have met three times this year, aiming to build on work done at Copenhagen. To date, all the meetings this year have shown that Parties are keen to move forward, although key divisions and challenges remain.

Under the Kyoto Protocol, the Chair has, for the first time since the group began its work in 2005, tabled a text based on results of the work to date. It is expected that this text will be the basis for negotiations at Tianjin, where a significant amount of work will need to be done in order to decide on the future of the Kyoto Protocol.

Work has also continued under the Convention. At the first session in April this year, Parties agreed to integrate elements of the Copenhagen outcome into this text, which has been completed.

Recently, Parties also reintroduced their well-known positions into the text. On the one hand, this has been constructive in turning the text into a party-driven text. On the other hand, it is clear that Parties now need to show flexibility beyond their national positions.

It is clear that the search for common ground needs to be accelerated in order to reach an outcome at Cancun.

Tianjin will provide Parties with the opportunity to identify what is achievable in Cancun and what needs further work after Cancun. Those elements that are achievable in Cancun need to be elaborated to a comparable level of detail and need to be politically balanced. In that sense, Parties may want to use Tianjin to determine what incremental steps can be taken to achieve such a political balance, especially on the more challenging issues.

At the last session in Bonn, broad convergence emerged that a set of decisions in Cancun could be an achievable outcome. This would build a structure for operationalizing some key elements of the Bali Action Plan, including the following:

- An adaptation framework to boost all aspects necessary for implementation, including assessments, planning and support;
- A technology mechanism to boost all aspects of technology cooperation and sharing between the North and the South;
- The creation of a new fund to house long-term climate funding;
- Enhanced capacity-building with institutional arrangements;
- Reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries.

The operationalization of these elements would yield tangible benefits, especially for developing countries. With ministerial guidance, negotiators could advance these issues. At the same time, it is evident that these operational issues cannot advance without an overall agreement on a package of politically charged issues that includes:

- The continuation of the Kyoto Protocol;
- The formalization of mitigation pledges put forward by Parties in 2010 and the accompanying accountability;
- The mobilization of long-term financing and the accompanying accountability;
- Response measures;
- The understanding of fairness that will guide long-term mitigation efforts.

These issues are critical in the negotiations, but they are in deadlock. Yet without their resolution, the process will not deliver in *any* area.

The process needs continued and strong engagement by Ministers to move these issues out of deadlock. And negotiators need to demonstrate flexibility both in Tianjin and in Cancun to reach an outcome with which no-one will be delighted, but that everybody can live with. With political will and a spirit of compromise, I trust that the deadlock can be overcome. This is the only way to provide clarity and help Cancun become a conference with real outcomes - even if not a final outcome.

Excellencies - I hope we agree that Cancun needs an outcome that shows the world that this process **is** working, that our quest for a global solution is beginning to pay off and that a safer, greener world for all is possible, even if not easy.

Without such an outcome, I see a real threat to our belief in multilateralism. Even more worrying, I see millions of poor people, abandoned to a desperate fate caused by our short-sighted inaction.

I urge you to brief your respective Ministries at home with that in mind.

Thank you

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