

LMDC Opening statement for Informal SBs Session – 31 May, 2021

Bolivia has the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the LMDC. We wish to align ourselves with that statement of the G77/China.

We also wish to remember the important contributions of the late Minister Paul Oquist from Nicaragua, a member of the LMDC family who passed away last month. We wish to convey our deepest condolences to his family and to the Government of Nicaragua.

We also wish to express our strong solidarity and support for the State of Palestine.

Views on the process

This session of the SBs has adopted an 'informal' modality in a virtual setting and is indeed an extraordinary session, in the current circumstances of the on-going Covid- 19 pandemic, which prevents the convening of face-to-face meetings, which we all prefer.

Despite the assistance provided by the UNFCCC Secretariat in overcoming some of the technical issues, many of our member groups will continue to face immense challenges due to issues of connectivity and technological handicaps.

Hence, there is need to exercise extreme caution and sensitivity on how these informal consultations are conducted.

Of particular importance is the need to treat with caution, agenda items that were covered by Rule 16 at the conclusion of the Madrid COP.

We must appreciate and recognize the disadvantages that developing countries have in this virtual setting, and must not exacerbate the problems further, with informal notes and outcome documents which are not inclusive or balanced and which adopt 'a pick and choose approach' that side-lines the positions of some Parties.

The outcome documents produced by the co-facilitators and the SB Chairs must contain the balanced views of all Parties and should refrain from containing any conclusions.

Groups and Parties should be allowed to reflect on the notes produced out of these informal consultations and be given the opportunity for feedback.

We therefore call on the SB Chairs to ensure close oversight and control over the co-facilitators, in conducting their work, so that this remains a party-driven process.

On the issue of varying time zones, we are not comfortable with having different sessions at the same time, as we will miss out on some interventions. We therefore reiterate the need for recordings of the sessions to be made available to Parties, so that we are all able to see what interventions were made to have a comprehensive view of the discussions.

On the organization of work, 4 parallel meetings a day is indeed challenging, especially for small delegations, and we have to be mindful that the agenda is not overloaded, to enable the effective engagement of all Parties.

Views on the substance

Many of our countries, especially in the developing world, continue to face very challenging and difficult times in dealing with the pandemic. With the lack of adequate vaccines and the emergence of new strains, our health systems are in grave crisis and stretched to the limits.

We are also facing grave challenges in having to undertake stricter health restrictions which are impacting losses to our economies, with rising unemployment, poverty and indebtedness in many developing countries.

Despite these extraordinary circumstances, we are committed to implementing the climate actions that we have promised to undertake under our NDCs.

Increasing the level of ambition in many of our countries has to be commensurate with increased ambition on the means of implementation from our partners, which after all, is the foundation for international cooperation under the Convention and its' Paris Agreement.

This is in line with respect for the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities between developed and developing countries.

We are also concerned by the application of unilateral coercive or extra-territorial economic measures, including in relation to international trade, which are inconsistent with international law. These actions adversely affect the capabilities of developing countries to finance their efforts in mitigation and adaptation to climate change and hinder their right to access available resources. In this context, it is of utmost importance that all necessary measures be undertaken to ensure the depoliticized flow of international resources by all financial mechanisms under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement to all eligible Parties. We reiterate our concerns on the lack of response of the GEF to the communication received from some of our members requesting support.

On the specifics of the SB issues

At this SBs session, a lot of attention and focus has been given to some of the issues such as the Enhanced Transparency Framework and Article 6 of the Paris Agreement at this SB session.

Many of the items of importance to developing countries such as finance, adaptation and loss and damage have been relegated to future SB sessions and the COP for various reasons.

Hence, we must rectify this imbalance in the future sessions, to ensure that the outcomes in Glasgow are balanced and not tilted mainly in relation to mitigation. Balanced outcomes are vital for the success of COP 26.

On the agenda item on 'Financial and technical support', we also wish to highlight that this is vital both for the continued reporting of National Communications (which more developing countries report than Biennial Update Reports), and the new Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) under the Paris Agreement.

In addition, for developing countries to meet their reporting requirements and for implementing our climate actions, the availability of adequate, credible and predictable, new and additional climate finance is critical. As we have stressed before, the scope, scale and speed of climate finance from developed countries is lagging and needs to be rectified.

We also reiterate the importance of maintaining eligibility of all developing countries for receiving climate finance support from the operating entities of the financial mechanism of the Convention. No conditionality should be imposed to limit developing countries' eligibility to receive funding support.

On adaptation, we do not see a balanced treatment on the agenda items neither in this session nor in the global finance arena. Adaptation is still being seen as a second priority after mitigation, and we hope during this period we can redirect our efforts to elevate its importance in the process.

We need to finally find a concrete way forward to designate specific financial resources for the implementation of the National Adaptation Plans.

In addition, we look forward to keep our discussions under the principles and guidance agreed for the information required for the Global Stocktake from the Nairobi Work Program, among other sources of input.

On the item of the fourth review of the Adaptation Fund, it is indeed vital to discuss whether the scale of resources of the Fund is commensurate with the scale of the needs of developing countries in adaptation. Also vital is the need for recognition of its Direct Access modality which should address the lessons learnt with a view to identifying options for enhancing and scaling up this modality.

On the Transparency Framework, we had a workshop in May and found the format problematic. Given that the transparency issues are very technical and with the time zone and virtual format, it is very difficult to discuss matters online. We are not in favour of more virtual workshops in the latter half of the year. What is needed to resolve many of the issues is face to face meetings that will help iron out the difficulties.

One specific item on the Transparency Framework and Article 6 referred to in para 47 of the SBSTA scenario note related to para 77 (d) of the annex to decision 18/CMA.1, we wish to reiterate our position that our preference is for the Article 6 discussions to be completed before embarking on the issues under the Transparency Framework in order to save the limited time we have during the session.

We also note with concern the lack of progress on agenda items 4(b) and 4(c) under the SBI agenda and would like to highlight the importance of moving these items forward during this session as time is running out and developing countries need to have a clear plan for the technical and financial support to be ready for preparation of the BTRs.

On the Common Time Frames of NDCs, our group's views were not reflected in the final outcome document of discussions in Madrid, which has caused us much concern. We trust that in this SB1 session, the views of our group are properly reflected so that all options are on the table for consideration.

On response measures, the group wants to stress on the importance of the full operationalization of the Katowice Committee of Experts (KCI) and the implementation of the 6-year workplan agreed to in Madrid. It is absolutely key for our group to make up for the time lost to date and to ensure balance across all agenda items in terms of time allocation and progress.

As said before, these are very challenging times for all of us.

In order to ensure the success of COP 26 in Glasgow, trust in this process is paramount. To that end, the LMDC will be engaged and will support your efforts.

Thank-you.