

## **Mobilizing Political Momentum for Copenhagen**

### ***Note from the Secretary-General to Heads of States and Governments Regarding the Summit on Climate Change 22 September 2009***

*Climate change is one of the most fundamental challenges ever to confront humanity. No issue is more fundamental to long-term global prosperity. And no issue is more essential to our survival as a species.*

*In December, the world's governments will meet in Copenhagen at the United Nations Climate Change Conference. A fair, effective and comprehensive global climate deal in Copenhagen is an unequivocal requirement to stop climate change from slipping out of control. Success in Copenhagen can jumpstart a fundamental transformation of the global economy, strengthening climate-resilient development, and, most urgently, assisting the world's poorest and most vulnerable to adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change.*

*This year presents the global community with a unique opportunity to address the climate challenge at the highest level of political engagement, and to chart a new course to sustainable development and global prosperity based on low-emissions green growth.*

*This year, I am calling upon you, along with your fellow world leaders, to realize this opportunity.*

*The objective of the Summit on Climate Change, which I am convening on 22 September, is to mobilize the political will and vision needed to reach an ambitious agreed outcome based on science at the UN climate talks in Copenhagen.*

*The Summit will provide focused opportunities for roundtable discussion between you and your fellow Heads of State and Government. In this way, I hope that cooperation between and among developed and developing countries can be strengthened, and that the political impetus for a successful deal in Copenhagen will be made manifestly clear to all participants.*

*As a result of your discussions, I expect that you and your fellow leaders will be better equipped to provide clear political guidance and direction to your negotiating teams on five core issues, which are described in detail in this paper. Roundtable discussions will focus on a common theme: How we can fundamentally transform our economies to enable sustainable, low-emissions growth and development while assisting communities to adapt to climate change?*

*I encourage you to think boldly and creatively in preparing for these roundtable sessions, with an eye toward strengthening cooperation among your colleagues and catalyzing forward movement in the climate negotiations.*

**BAN Ki-moon  
Secretary-General**

## **I. Introduction and overview**

The purpose of this document is to help frame discussions at the Summit by providing key information on the core political issues that need to be resolved to catalyze strengthened cooperative action on climate change. The Annex provides important contextual information on climate change and the inter-governmental negotiations.

The round tables will provide world leaders with an interactive setting to develop a common understanding on the core political issues and to add the much needed political momentum for the successful conclusion of the negotiations in Copenhagen. During the round tables, leaders will be invited to contribute their national perspectives to an emerging global vision. Discussions will focus on the following theme: transformation of our economies to enable climate-resilient, sustainable low-emissions growth for this and future generations.

Building on the commitment of each and every Member State to realize this transformation and seal a deal in Copenhagen in December 2009; and recognizing that five core political issues – as discussed in Section II below - need guidance from Heads of State and Government, world leaders may want to frame their discussions by focusing on the following questions.

- Question 1:** What kind of conditions for life do you envisage acceptable in the long term? What kind of long-term climate change goals would they imply, and how should these guide our efforts in addressing climate change and achieving sustainable development?
- Question 2:** How can you as Head of State or Government provide guidance to the negotiation process before Copenhagen on the five core political issues outlined in Section II?
- Question 3:** What actions are you prepared to contribute individually and together with others, between now and before Copenhagen, to ensure that the world's expectations for sealing a strong climate change deal in Copenhagen are met?
- Question 4:** What must Copenhagen deliver for you to regard the deal as a success?

Some of the core policy issues are expected to be advanced during the Summit. However, further political discussion may be needed in national capitals to acquire clarity on all the core political issues.

It is critically important that political direction be provided to negotiating teams and relevant national officials before Copenhagen begins, as well as in advance of the upcoming negotiating sessions to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, and in Barcelona, Spain.

## **II. Five core political issues for a deal in Copenhagen**

Global efforts to transition towards a climate-resilient and low-emissions future must be guided by a vision for long-term cooperation on all areas, including adaptation, mitigation, finance and technology. Mitigation and adaptation efforts are closely related. A long-term global goal for emission reductions will define a physical environment for future generations and provide a time-frame for achieving lower stabilization levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and hence reduce the risk of more severe climate change impacts in the future. A balanced approach must

safeguard the survival of the most vulnerable and ensure that all countries can pursue sustainable development.

A long-term goal for emission reductions provides both the aspiration and the yardstick for establishing concrete and measurable actions and goals in the medium term. A global goal for limiting global temperature and the required emission reductions for 2050 must be based on sound science, as well as economic and technological feasibility. It must also be complemented by action on adaptation and mitigation.

The political issues presented in this section are central to advancing global cooperation on climate change. These issues are strongly interlinked – both politically and functionally – and hence must be addressed as a package if the response is to be effective. Political direction and guidance on these issues, coupled with a commitment to resolving them, will help to seal an ambitious deal in Copenhagen.

Copenhagen may not necessarily resolve all the details needed to ensure future global cooperation on climate change. But the minimum political imperative for success at Copenhagen is that it resolves the core political issues that can enable a new level of cooperation.

**1. Action to assist the poorest and most vulnerable to adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change**

The world's climate will continue to change at rates unprecedented in human history and with unprecedented impact. The risks associated with these changes are real and are very likely to intensify in the future. But impacts are already well-known by communities who have suffered climate-related disasters.

Climate change has the potential to push developing countries back into the poverty trap and to significantly contribute towards undoing the achievements that have been made to date with regard to the Millennium Development Goals. There is an urgent need for an integrated policy response to climate change that is formed in the context of national and international sustainable development priorities, recognizing also gender equity. Any delay in taking adaptation measures, and making available the needed resources for developing countries, means increased costs and greater risks to humanity in the future.

Before Copenhagen, the main issues that require guidance include:

- How to intensify global cooperation to ensure that sufficient attention is paid to adaptation;
- How to ensure the immediate assistance that the most vulnerable require to cope and reduce their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change;
- How to raise the level of commitment to ensure that adaptation receives the attention it requires in light of the scientific urgency.

**2. Ambitious mid-term mitigation targets by developed countries**

Developed countries are required to take the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Doing so necessitates agreement on an ambitious mid-term target for industrialised countries as a whole. Each one of them needs to make an effort of comparable scale in line with their historical responsibility and current capabilities. Targets should ideally be built on a long-term goal for emission reductions that is acceptable to all, including to those that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Mid-term policy action is essential in light of up-coming investments, for example in the energy sector. Clarity on the level of ambition will enable the private sector to make low-emissions investments with confidence.

To date, most developed countries have announced their mid-term target for emission reductions for 2020. Pledges for mid-term targets by industrialised countries fall woefully short of the IPCC range of a 25 to 40 per cent reduction below 1990 levels by 2020 associated with an temperature increase of 2 degrees.

Before Copenhagen, the main issues that require guidance include:

- A sufficiently ambitious mid-term target for developed countries as a group to ensure that their long-term aspirational goal will be met;
- The appropriate international mechanisms and cooperation arrangements to elevate the current level of ambition in line with the imperatives of science;
- How to raise the level of ambition for national reduction targets for individual developed countries.

### **3. Supported actions by developing countries to slow the growth of their emissions**

The biggest contribution to the global emission increase over the next decades is projected to come from developing countries, though their average per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will remain substantially lower than those in developed countries. Many developing countries are already implementing domestic mitigation actions that are driven by national development priorities, but provide strong global mitigation benefits.

In Bali, developing countries indicated they are willing to undertake additional nationally appropriate mitigation actions as part of their development strategies, provided they receive financial, technological and capacity-building support for such actions.

Deforestation has been identified as an important issue for many developing countries. Some estimates show that deforestation has contributed globally up to a fifth of annual greenhouse gas emissions in the 1990s. Forests store more carbon than the entire atmosphere. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation, and conserving and sustainably managing forests and enhancement of forests' carbon stocks, can provide immediate and substantial mitigation benefits. These efforts will also provide multiple, long-term benefits for livelihoods and national development.

A major concern of developing countries is that mitigation actions could distract resources away from poverty eradication and economic growth – two key priorities that hinge on access to reliable energy sources. Huge investments are set to be made into the energy supply infrastructure in developing countries over the next 10-20 years. These investments can be directed toward green or lower-emission energy sources, enabling both climate and development goals to be met simultaneously. Targeted assistance for climate-friendly, low-emissions growth will assist developing countries in achieving these priorities.

Before Copenhagen, the main issues that require guidance include:

- The scope and scale of supported mitigation actions by developing countries that are both consistent with national development priorities and able to lead to a substantial limitation of emissions;
- The level of feasible and required international support for mitigation actions by developing countries;
- Broadening political commitment and support, especially financial and technical assistance, in the interim for a speedy implementation of activities broadly related to

reducing deforestation and forest degradation, as well as conservation and sustainable management of forests.

#### **4. Predictable scaled-up financial and technological support for adaptation and mitigation actions by developing countries**

Adequate financial, technological, and capacity-building support is the engine for advancing international cooperation on climate change as well as national action. An essential part of a comprehensive deal in Copenhagen is identifying how to generate new, additional and predictable financial resources, and then deploying and transferring the needed technologies to where they are most needed.

Resources are needed to support adaptation in developing countries and to enable them to advance their additional mitigation actions. The extent and magnitude of developing country actions will depend to a significant extent on the speed and scale of financing and technology support.

Both public and private financing resources will be needed. They must be new and additional resources, as voluntary contributions will not suffice. These funding sources must be predictable and sustainable, and scaled-up as quickly as possible. Public funding will be especially important for those sectors in developing countries that depend on government investment and financial flows. Significant public support is also essential to unleash technology cooperation, build capacity, and provide funding to leverage private sector involvement.

Multilateral and bilateral sources of funding also represent important options for mobilising funds. It is critical that these sources are new and additional to current official development assistance. Overall needs have been estimated to total up to US\$ 250 billion per annum in 2020.

The engagement of the private sector is indispensable because of its key role in financing, technology deployment and trade. In the context of a long-term goal and stringent emission reduction targets by developed countries, an effectively regulated international carbon market, with proper oversight, could channel predictable and significant resources to developing countries.

In times of economic uncertainty, the world needs to seize the opportunity of generating a large amount of the required finance from within the climate change regime and through the carbon market. It will be important to create a mix of financial instruments with effective disbursement mechanisms.

Presently, adaptation costs are primarily borne by the affected countries including poor vulnerable communities which have no responsibility for emissions. Kick-starting the actions initiated in Copenhagen is a priority. This can be achieved through start-up funding in the range of several billions of dollars. Such funds would need to be made rapidly available to developing countries so that: (1) the most vulnerable can fund urgently needed adaptation measures; (2) all countries can start preparing their national adaptation plans and develop nationally appropriate mitigation actions; and (3) countries can initiate preparations to address emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

Before Copenhagen, the main issues that require guidance include:

- Scaling up public funding so that the required new, additional and predictable financial resources, beyond voluntary contributions, can be generated;
- The burden-sharing arrangements for long-term funding and support;
- The willingness to contribute to the urgently needed start-up funding;
- How to enhance technology cooperation to accelerate the development, deployment and diffusion of environmentally-sound technologies.

**5. Institutional arrangements and governance structures that address the needs of developing countries**

Copenhagen needs to deliver on an efficient mix of financial instruments with effective means of disbursement, measurement, reporting and verification. Much of the currently available funding has not reached developing countries in a way that is regarded as efficient or beneficial. It is critical that any funds that are agreed as part of the Copenhagen outcome be governed by principles of equity, respect the interests and needs of developing countries, and include them as equal decision-making partners.

Any agreed-upon institutional arrangement needs to optimize the allocation of funds and provide for a transparent system to monitor, report, and verify both actions and support. In this regard, there is a need to further explore proposals for the strengthening of existing institutions in addition to proposals for the creation of new institutions.

The United Nations system continues to actively support climate change implementation in all areas of work. Over the years, the United Nations has built significant expertise at the programmatic and operational levels, while catalyzing the involvement of civil society and private sector actors. The United Nations system, including its specialized agencies, will continue to assist countries in implementing all existing and future climate frameworks through analytical, policy, and programmatic support, as well as the provision of essential coordination services.

Before Copenhagen, the main issues that require guidance include:

- The principles of the financial architecture that will ensure effective and efficient disbursement, safe-guard accountability and ensure private sector engagement;
- An effective institutional structure that ensures equitable governance and safe-guards that resources are allocated in line with national priorities of developing countries.

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## ANNEX: Setting the foundation for a better future

There is overwhelming scientific evidence, as shown in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), that climate change will threaten economic growth and long-term prosperity, as well as the survival of the most vulnerable populations. The science is clear: the warming of the climate system is unequivocal and impacts are accelerating. IPCC projections indicate that if emissions continue to rise at their current pace and are allowed to double from their pre-industrial level, the world is likely to face temperature increases of between 2°C - 4.5°C this century, with a most likely value of 3°C.

Serious adverse impacts are associated with this scenario, including sea-level rise, shifts in growing seasons, loss of biodiversity, and an increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heat waves, storms, floods and droughts. While many of these risks may be reduced, developing countries and the poor are likely to be most affected.

### Examples of climate change impacts:

- *By 2020, in some African countries, yields from rain-fed agriculture (the dominant method) could be reduced by up to 50%.*
- *Approximately 20-30% of plant and animal species are likely to be at increased risk of extinction if increases in global average temperature exceed 1.5-2.5°C.*
- *Widespread melting of glaciers and snow cover will create a risk of flash floods and in the longer term reduce annual melt water from major mountain ranges (e.g. Hindu-Kush, Himalaya, Andes), where more than one billion people currently live.*
- *Seven out of ten disasters are now climate-related.*
- *More than 20 million people were displaced by sudden climate-related disasters in 2008 alone. An estimated 200 million people could be displaced as a result of climate impacts by 2050.*

Sources: IPCC, UN, Stern Review 2006

A Copenhagen deal in 2009 is an essential requirement for seriously addressing climate change. Climate change poses serious risks and its impacts have the potential to undermine significant components of existing economic and social infrastructures. Consequently, adapting to climate change and building climate resilient economies requires an urgent global response.

The Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) launched the Bali Road Map at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in 2007. The Bali Road Map entails a two-year negotiating process to strengthen the international response to climate change up to and beyond 2012. It includes negotiations under the Convention, based on the Bali Action Plan, and under the Kyoto Protocol to set commitments for developed country Parties for a second commitment period after 2012.

Since December 2007 further compelling evidence has emerged as to why the international community needs to act now. Climate change has been found to be dangerously accelerating beyond previous projections. Experts indicate that inaction will be more costly than acting now.

The IPCC estimates that global mean temperatures have already increased by 0.7°C. Under its most stringent emission reduction scenario, the world has a 50% chance of limiting further temperature increases to 2°C. According to the IPCC, achieving a 2°C temperature limit will require a comprehensive global mitigation effort, including a further tightening of existing climate policies in developed countries and simultaneous emission mitigation in developing countries. One way of achieving this would necessitate global emissions to peak before 2020 and be globally reduced by at least 50% below 1990 levels by 2050. This would be achieved through emission reductions by industrialised countries of 25% - 40% below 1990 levels by 2020 and a substantial deviation of

emissions below projected baseline levels in Latin America, the Middle East, East Asia and Central Asia.

The impacts associated with this mitigation scenario are still serious, but are widely regarded as more manageable if a risk reduction approach is fully embraced. The G8 Summit of 2009 and the Major Economies Forum have recently recognised the scientific view that global average temperature increase ought not to exceed 2°C. However, some of the most vulnerable countries, including the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), have criticised a 2°C target as not ambitious enough. They are already suffering the effects of sea-level rise due to the present temperature increase and are likely to lose some of their territories under a 2°C scenario. For them, a maximum increase of 1.5°C is the boundary between survival and demise.

#### **Emissions trends**

- *Between 1970 and 2004, emissions of greenhouse gases have increased by 70% and CO<sub>2</sub>, by far the largest source (77% of total greenhouse gas emissions), has grown by about 80%*
- *Without additional policies, global GHG emissions are projected to increase by 25-90% by 2030 relative to 2000.*
- *CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from energy use are projected to grow by 40-110% over that period.*
- *Two thirds to three quarters of this increase is projected to come from developing countries, though their average per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will remain substantially lower than those in developed country regions.*

Source: IPCC

Clearly, stringent emission reductions are required to keep temperature increases as low as possible. Given that the largest share of emissions, now and in the past, originates from conventional economic activity, especially from the energy sector, moving the emissions goal posts requires building a global economy that runs on a sustainable, low-emissions industrial base.

Calls for a transition to a global climate-resilient and green low-emission economy have echoed around the world. Greening and climate-proofing the economy are widely regarded as viable ways of restoring job growth, reducing persistent poverty and inequity and achieving a more sustainable economy.

Action targeting economic growth and action on climate change can be mutually reinforcing as both aim for higher sustainability, efficiency and risk reduction. A successful Copenhagen deal needs to further strengthen this relationship and put the world on a safer course. In the context of a low-emissions global economy, enhanced action on technology is essential for developing countries to scale up and accelerate mitigation and adaptation. This will contribute to sustainable development, poverty alleviation, employment creation and green economic growth. This was also recognised by the General Assembly at its sixty-third session who agreed to “look forward to a successful outcome of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, to be held in Copenhagen in

#### **The economics of climate change**

- *The benefits of strong, early action considerably outweigh the costs.*
- *According to the IPCC, mitigation costs in 2030 would not exceed 3% of global GDP.*
- *To return global greenhouse gas emissions to current levels in 2030 would require a small increase in global investments and financial flows: between USD 200-210 billion in 2030.*
- *Markets for low-emissions energy products are likely to be worth at least \$500bn per year by 2050, and perhaps much more.*
- *Overall needs for adaptation and mitigation have been estimated to total up to US\$ 250 billion per annum in 2020.*
- *Cost estimates for adaptation range from USD 41 billion at present to USD 86 billion in the year 2015.*

Sources: IPCC 2007, Stern Review 2006, UNDP 2007, UNFCCC 2007, World Bank 2006

December 2009, as part of our overall efforts for a green recovery from the crisis" (A/RES/63/303 para 32).

At the same time, climate change impacts have the potential to undermine significant components of existing economic and social infrastructures and current changes already threaten to undermine progress made towards the achievement of development goals. Consequently, adapting to climate change and building climate resilient economies is required as urgently as transitioning towards a global green low-emissions economy.

To achieve what is needed, a Copenhagen deal needs to create the legal and policy framework that drives such a transition. Governments in Copenhagen have to agree to a new level of cooperation between developing and developed countries. Copenhagen is only a few months away. But significant work still remains to be accomplished, and all countries, developing and developed, will need to do their part on the basis of their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective

**Benefits of greening economic growth**

- *In the Republic of Korea, some 80 percent of the national \$38 billion fiscal stimulus package is dedicated to green measures, the highest percentage in the world. Nearly one million green jobs will be created over the next four years;*
- *China's renewable energy sector is worth nearly \$17 billion and employs close to 1 million workers. China has 500,000 jobs dedicated to producing solar panels;*
- *The United States aims to boost job creation by up to 3 million through green measures by end-2010.*

Source: UNEP

capabilities in order to reach success at Copenhagen.

Copenhagen may not necessarily resolve all the details of future global cooperative action on climate change. But the minimum political imperative for success at Copenhagen is that it resolves the core political issues that can enable a new level of cooperation. Copenhagen needs to be a fair, equitable agreement, that boosts global cooperation with a view to putting in place the foundations for a better future. Now is the time for leaders to provide political direction and clarity on the core political essentials