27

Statement by Paula Lehtomäki, Minister of the Environment of Finland

at the 16th Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and CMP6 of the Kyoto Protocol

8 December 2010, Cancún, Mexico

Distinguished Chairman, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to first thank our Mexican hosts for the great hospitality we have received here in the beautiful city of Cancún, and for guiding us skillfully in the negotiations.

While expectations are not as high now as they were a year ago, this meeting is very important. A lot is at stake. Cancún must deliver real and concrete progress. We must keep the 2 degree target achievable. The UNEP report recently launched in Helsinki makes it clear that while the emission reduction pledges made so far are a good start, much more is needed.

We all agree that the outcome of Cancún must be a balanced one. It means flexibility and compromises by all of us.

On the convention side, I can see that several key issues are ripe for decision. We should ensure these decisions are made here in Cancún. We are close to agreement on REDD+, on adaptation, and on technology. We have also made progress on the establishment of the new green climate fund. These are all very important elements of the future regime.

At the same time, we need to ensure equally ambitious progress on mitigation, market mechanisms as well as measuring, reporting and verifying emissions in all countries. It is exactly these issues that are crucial for the achievement of the 2 degree target, and for the credibility and transparency of the whole regime.

Finland fully understands the great importance of the Kyoto Protocol. It is the only legally binding instrument to tackle climate change. We think that the key elements of the protocol, especially the binding targets for developed countries, the accounting rules and the use of flexible mechanisms, should be kept as part of any new regime. Finland, together with our EU colleagues, has constantly repeated that we are open towards a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, as part of a wider agreement and with some essential revisions.

The problem with the Kyoto Protocol is that it covers less than 30% of global emissions. It can never be the only solution. This is why we see the need for a more meaningful and wider regime, with all major emitters participating.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I also want to touch upon one key element of the Copenhagen Accord – fast start finance. I am happy to be say that Finland and the European Union are delivering the fast start finance pledges we made in Copenhagen.

Finland is contributing with an estimated 24.5 million this year, 46.2 million in 2011 and 39.3 million in 2012. We want to show transparently what we are doing, and we encourage all other donors to do the same.

Finland is also firmly on the Kyoto track. But we are committed to reducing our emissions further. The Government's foresight report sets a target to reduce our emissions by at least 80 per cent by 2050.

In the international negotiations, we have also underlined the role of women in climate change decision making and practises. I am pleased to see that the gender issue has gained several other supporters here.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finland expects Cancún to be a clear step forward. The outcome of Cancun should provide us with both immediate, concrete results and a clear vision for the next steps towards a regime that can achieve our 2 degree target.

The challenge of climate change is not going away – on the contrary, it is getting steadily worse and making a huge impact on human activities everywhere. The process cannot become more important than the result. So let's make sure we are back on track after Cancún.