environmental affairs
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29 January 2010

Dear Mr de Boer

Throughout its participation in the climate negotiations, South Africa strongly believed that the negotiations in Copenhagen should result in an outcome which would urgently address the long term global challenge of climate change in a fair and equitable manner. However, we acknowledge that, in Copenhagen, we were faced with widely divergent views on many key questions and issues that have been under discussion for the past two years. This result was not achieved. Without the political will to move forward no agreement is possible.

In order to obtain political direction, South Africa participated in the "Friends of the President" process convened by Prime Minister Rasmussen aimed at reaching political agreement among Parties on some key issues that have been difficult to resolve during the negotiations. While the Copenhagen Accord was not adopted by the COP, we acknowledge that it captures political agreement on some contentious elements among those Parties that participated in its' development and those other Parties that may wish to associate themselves with it. As such, the Copenhagen Accord is a political declaration within the UNFCCC process that should provide valuable direction and impetus to the further negotiations under the Convention and its' Kyoto Protocol this year, with the aim to finalise at COP 16 and CMP 6 an ambitious, fair, effective and binding multilateral agreement, in line with the 2007 Bali Road Map mandates. South Africa therefore welcomes decision x/CP.15 and decision x/CMP.5 that requests the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action and the Ad hoc Working Group on Further Commitments of Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol to continue work. To this end, we are supportive of the commitments made by developed countries in the Copenhagen Accord to provide US$ 10 billion per year to enhance immediate implementation of climate change action and ensure readiness to take climate action between now and 2012 in developing countries, particularly in those countries most vulnerable, such as the Least Developed Countries, African countries and Small Island Developing States. The flow of US$10 billion during 2010 will be of great value in building confidence and trust in the multi-lateral climate change negotiations leading up to the Mexican Climate Change Conference in December this year.

In response to your notification Ref. YBD/DBO/drl of 18 January 2010, South Africa notes that paragraph 5 of the Copenhagen Accord calls for Non-Annex 1 Parties to submit to the UNFCCC secretariat, by 31 January 2010, the nationally appropriate mitigation action that they will implement, for compilation in an INF document.

The commitment of South Africa to play its part to address climate change has already been reflected in President Zuma's announcement made on the 6th of December 2009. South Africa has conducted an internationally reviewed study of its mitigation potential in the context of long-term mitigation scenarios, which has informed the nationally appropriate mitigation action that may be taken. In accordance with the provisions of Article 12 paragraph 1(b) as well as Article 12 paragraph 4 and pursuant to the provisions of Article 4 paragraph 1 of the Convention, South Africa reiterates that it will take nationally appropriate mitigation action to enable a 34% deviation below the 'Business As Usual' emissions growth trajectory by 2020 and a 42% deviation below the 'Business As Usual' emissions growth trajectory by 2025. In accordance with Article 4.7 of the Convention, the extent to which this action will be implemented depends on the provision of financial resources, the transfer of technology and capacity building support by developed countries. Therefore, the above action requires the finalisation of an ambitious, fair, effective and binding multilateral agreement under the UNFCCC and its' Kyoto Protocol at COP 16 and CMP 6 in Mexico to enable the delivery of this support. With financial, technology and capacity building support from the international community, this level of effort will enable South Africa's green house gas emissions to peak between 2020 and 2025, plateau for approximately a decade and decline in absolute terms thereafter.

Sincerely.

Alf Wills
Deputy Director General: International Cooperation
Department of Environmental Affairs
For the South African National Focal Point