



World Leaders Vow to Stay Engaged in UN Climate Talks Following Historic Summit at UN

The 101 world leaders who participated in the Summit on climate change at the United Nations in New York on 22 September injected new optimism into the search for an agreement to tackle climate change.

In addition to discussing national plans for reducing emissions and for adapting to the impacts of climate change, the leaders stressed the need to find an agreement at the global level at the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen this December.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the Summit "marked the moment when the political momentum has shifted in favour of sealing a fair, effective and ambitious global climate deal in Copenhagen."

"This Summit has put fresh wind in our sails," he said. "It has harnessed much needed political momentum. We're on the right track. Today we achieved what we set out to do. We focused the attention of world leaders at the highest level on the urgent need for action. We helped bridge differences and build trust between developed and developing countries by bringing them together at the same table in private, face-to-face discussions."

Following the Summit, a number of leaders said they were prepared to come together again before Copenhagen, depending on how negotiations go, with the Secretary-General stating that he is prepared to convene such a meeting, if desired.

Issues of trust between developed and developing countries, and the need to finance mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries, emerged as key issues to be resolved by the Heads of State and Government in future talks.

More apparent, however, was the broad areas of agreement that were expressed by countries. In presenting the Chair's Summary, the Secretary-General cited a universal willingness of countries to contribute their fair share to reducing global emissions subject to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. He said developed country leaders acknowledged that they must lead and that many leaders referred to the need to reduce developed country emissions by 25 to 40% from the 1990 levels by 2020. And while leaders agreed that the 2020 targets currently proposed by developed countries are inadequate, many indicated that they can do more in the context of an international agreement.

Although the Summit was not a negotiation, many countries made announcements on their climate plans. Japan pledged to slash their emissions by 25 per cent by 2020, and the Maldives said it intends to become climate-neutral by 2020. China announced new national efficiency targets that would slow the growth of emissions, and the United States spoke about plans for greater investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency. The European Union promised €5-7 billion for fast-track funding for adaptation projects, and the United Kingdom called for a \$100 billion a year fund for adaptation.

Many vulnerable countries reminded the international community of the impacts of climate change. Erratic weather, storm and droughts have offset Bangladesh's development programs, with budgeted resources diverted to humanitarian support, while Indonesia has budgeted a \$500 million for its 2010 budget for the expansion and protection of forest cover. In Nepal, global warming has led to unprecedented melting of snow in the Himalayas and has hurt the country's efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Ban said he "was heartened to hear that a growing number of leaders are prepared to move beyond purely national perspectives to global leadership. You have undertaken to remain engaged until a deal has been sealed in Copenhagen. And you have agreed to give guidance to your negotiators to work toward an ambitious, effective and fair deal in Copenhagen."

Next Steps:

There are only 15 negotiating days left before Copenhagen. The negotiations resumed on Monday, 28 September, for a 10-day session in Bangkok that will continue through to 9 October. This will be followed by a 5-day session in Barcelona from 2-6 November.

For more information, please contact Dan Shepard, tel. +1 212 963-9495, email shepard@un.org or Martina Donlon, tel.: +212-963-6816, email donlon@un.org

More information on the Summit is posted at www.un.org/climatechange/2009summit - available in all six UN languages.