

Eleventh Session of the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action Under the Convention (AWG – LCA 11)

STATEMENT BY BELGIUM AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES

Closing plenary on 6 August 2010

Madame Chair, distinguished colleagues, dear friends,

During the opening plenary of this session, the European Union stated once again that we think that forging a post-2012 agreement to combat climate change is ever more urgent and that we need speedy preparations if we want concrete outcomes in Cancún. We continue to believe that, Madame Chair.

At the beginning of this session we all agreed that the text proposed by you, Madame Chair, is an acceptable basis for negotiations. We were encouraged by the goodwill expressed across these halls.

However, we cannot but feel that this session, despite your best endeavours, did not live up to our expectations in terms of progress. We had hoped that on some of the issues we could succeed to find the convergence we need to deliver concrete and ambitious results in Cancún.

We did see some convergence emerging in a few areas and we want to maintain hope that such results remain within reach, but that is becoming more and more of a challenge, and not only due to time constraints. Madame Chair, we need to move forward from Copenhagen, not backward.

The EU thinks Cancún should put in place the key institutional and architectural arrangements for the comprehensive and ambitious legally binding outcome we need, on issues such as mitigation, MRV, financial architecture, REDD+, technology, adaptation, capacity building and market mechanisms.

Madame Chair, we acknowledge that the Kyoto track has made considerable progress at this session. However, we are also concerned. While within the Kyoto track, we are discussing clear cut options on accounting, etc., we don't see an equivalent of progress under the Convention track. We did not make much headway in our discussions on substance under the AWG LCA. Let me stress again, Madame Chair, that we need a balanced outcome in Cancún on both tracks. This balance is currently not being struck and that doesn't bode well for success in Cancún.

We nevertheless believe that even with the limited time remaining, it is still possible to make Cancún a success. But for that to happen, we need to speed up the pace of the negotiations - to put them on the 'fast track'. When we get to Tianjin in October, we need to immediately

resume our negotiations where we left off and not waste any further precious negotiating time with procedural discussions. Spin-off groups should start their work as soon as we reconvene.

In order to engage in a discussion on how to raise the level of ambition, we need to bring the commitments put forward by developed countries and the nationally appropriate mitigation actions of developing countries into the formal negotiating process. All countries should have the opportunity to do so and we encourage them to put forward their proposals before Tianjin. This information is essential for our negotiations. It is not a stepping stone for a pledge and review approach.

We had very useful informal consultations on the question of the legal form.

While reiterating our preference for a single legally binding instrument that would include the essential elements of the Kyoto Protocol, we said that we are flexible regarding the legal form, as long as it is binding. In all the conversations we had with Parties, we further clarified our openness to considering a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, as part of a wider approach in which a binding instrument capturing the outcome of the LCA process would complement and work in parallel with an improved Kyoto Protocol. Such an approach should ensure that other major emitters take on their fair share of the global emission reduction effort and that environmental integrity is improved. We noted with satisfaction that many Parties expressed similar interests.

Most Parties now seem to agree that expectations for Cancún should be realistic. Cancún will not yield the comprehensive legally binding outcome that eluded us in Copenhagen but to which we all still profess to aspire. But in order to achieve this long-awaited outcome in South Africa, Cancún should lay a solid foundation for the building, whose architecture we have begun to sketch at this session. This requires a politically balanced package of decisions. We all know what the necessary building blocks are; let us now collectively find the spirit of compromise that will cement them. What we need, to demonstrate the vitality of the multilateral process and the centrality of the UNFCCC, is a clear and time-bound plan on how to move ahead to South Africa.
