

Background Briefing on UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan

December 1, 2008



Overview

- History of the UN climate effort and US engagement
- Poznan: Midway from Bali to Copenhagen
- Outlook for Copenhagen: Key issues and potential outcomes

The UN Climate Agreements

UNFCCC

- 192 parties (including US)
- To prevent “dangerous” human interference
- “Common but differentiated responsibilities”
- Developed country “aim”: 1990 levels by 2000

Kyoto Protocol

- 183 parties
- Binding emission targets for 36 developed countries (average 5% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012)
- Market-based architecture

UN Climate Effort

- 1992 – UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
 - 191 parties, including the United States (signed by Bush I, unanimously ratified by Senate)
 - Objective: stabilization of greenhouse gases in the atmospheric to “prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”
 - A key principle: “common but differentiated responsibilities”
 - “Aim” of developed countries: 1990 emissions by 2000

UN Climate Effort

- **1995 - Berlin Mandate**
 - To negotiate binding targets for developed countries
- **1997 - Kyoto Protocol negotiated**
 - Sets binding emission targets for developed countries
 - At US insistence, architecture includes emissions trading and other market-based mechanisms
- **2001 - US rejects Kyoto**
 - Other countries then conclude negotiations on Kyoto implementation rules
- **2005 - Kyoto enters into force**

UN Climate Effort

- **Kyoto Protocol**
 - Binding emission targets for 36 developed countries
 - Range from -8% to +10%, average -5.2%
 - Cover 2/3 of industrialized, 1/3 of global, emissions
 - If met, global emissions will be up 30% in 2012 (about 2% below business as usual)
 - Greenhouse gas market
 - Clean Development Mechanism channeling investment to developing countries
 - With Europe's Emissions Trading Scheme, generating \$50 billion/year in trading (2007)

Post-2012 – Parallel Negotiating Tracks

Kyoto Protocol

AWG-KP

- Negotiation of post-2012 commitments for countries with Kyoto targets
- Launched in 2005 in Montreal
- No agreement yet on target range

UNFCCC

AWG-LCA

- Bali Action Plan calls for “agreed outcome” in 2009 on:
- “Shared vision for long-term cooperative action, including a long-term global goal”
 - Developed country mitigation “commitments or actions”
 - Developing country mitigation “actions” supported by technology, finance, etc.
 - Adaptation
 - Mitigation and support are to be “measurable, reportable, and verifiable”

Poznan – Midway from Bali to Copenhagen

- A final round of positioning before heading into real negotiations
- Parties will:
 - Take stock of progress since Bali
 - Consider and amend the Chair's compilation of "ideas and proposals" from governments
 - Adopt a "work program" for 2009
 - Hold a Ministerial roundtable on long-term vision
- Political direction/signals
 - Setting expectations for Copenhagen

Key Issues for Copenhagen

- “Comparability” of mid-term emission targets for developed countries
 - EU has goal of 20% below 1990 levels in 2020; urging 25-40% below for all developed countries
 - President-elect Obama calling for cap-and-trade legislation returning US emissions to 1990 levels in 2020
 - Measured against a *2005* baseline, both represent a reduction of about 15%
- Nature of developing country actions
 - What form will they take?
 - Will they amount to “commitments?”

Key Issues for Copenhagen

- Nature and level of technology, finance and adaptation support for developing countries
 - How will funds be raised?
 - How will support be provided?
 - New mechanisms?
 - Governance and conditionality
- How will mitigation actions/commitments and support for developing countries be measured, reported and verified (MRV'd)?

A Sampling of Country Proposals

- 2050 goal
 - Well below half of levels in 2000 (EU)
 - At least a 50% reduction (Japan, Russia)
- Developing country actions
 - Will depend on prior financial and technical support (G77/China)
 - Should be voluntary (China, Brazil, S. Africa, others)
 - Should be differentiated among groups of developing countries (EU, Australia, Japan, others)
 - Can include sustainable development policies and measures (EU, S. Africa, others), no-lose sectoral targets (EU, Japan, S. Africa), etc.
 - “Registry” of actions that countries pledge to implement with specified support (S. Africa, S. Korea)

A Sampling of Country Proposals

- Developed country targets
 - 25-40% below 1990 by 2020 (EU, China, Brazil, others); *if* developing countries reduce 15-30% below baseline (NZ)
 - Should be based on “bottom up” sectoral approach (Japan)
- “Character” of parties’ efforts (legally binding or voluntary)
 - Must be the same for developed and developing countries (US)
- Financial mechanism
 - World climate change fund supported by developed and developing countries per agreed criteria (Mexico)
 - Fund supported by auction of international emission allowances (Norway)
 - Global fossil fuel levy of \$2/ton CO₂ (Switzerland)
 - New funding should be 0.5-1% of developed country GNPs (G77/China)

Copenhagen Outcome?

- **Ideal: Full, final, ratifiable agreement**
 - But if US has not yet enacted cap/trade legislation, unlikely to be ready to agree to a specific target
 - Without US, others won't be ready either
- **Best plausible: Agreement on *architecture***
 - Outline types of commitments for developed, developing countries; mechanisms for developing country support
 - Provide basis for negotiating specific commitments
 - Ratifiable agreement in 2010 or 2011?
- **Worst case: A "failure"**
 - Risks setting back the politics and the process

For More Information

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