Co-chairs’ conclusions

Petersberg Climate Dialogue X – Fulfilling the promise of Paris

Berlin, 14 May 2019

On 13-14 May 2019, around 35 Ministers and high-level representatives, including the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC and the UN Special Envoy for the Climate Action Summit, met in Berlin on invitation of the Minister for Environment of Germany, Svenja Schulze, and Minister for Environment of Chile and designated COP 25-President, Carolina Schmidt. The informal setting allowed for open and frank discussions on ways to “fulfill the promise of Paris”.

In the light of current scientific findings and reports, as well as increasingly active and acting civil society, Ministers discussed the growing urgency to take action. Ministers expressed concern about the remaining time window to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. Several Ministers underlined their willingness to build on the current public momentum to step up action on implementation. Chancellor Merkel reconfirmed that Germany remains committed to tackle climate change and that Germany will exit coal combustion and production by 2038 at the latest. She also stressed that Germany will explore how to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.
Session 1: Preparing for COP 25

Minister Schmidt introduced the priorities of the Chilean presidency. These include the successful finalization of formal negotiation items, the need of increasing ambition in light of the best available science and the importance of engaging new actors. Executive Secretary Espinosa stressed that in this new phase, after COP 24, the heavy lifting still lays ahead of Ministers, as action needs to be stepped up. Ministers welcomed the adoption of detailed guidance for the implementation of the Paris Agreement at COP 24 in Poland and stressed that the focus now needs to shift towards implementation and cooperation. Regarding COP 25, the adoption of guidance for the use of Article 6 mechanisms emerged as an important goal. Many underlined the need for the mechanisms to ensure environmental integrity, avoid double counting and to contribute to sustainable development and the strengthening of NDCs. The importance for market mechanisms to create a significant share of proceeds for the Adaptation Fund was also mentioned. Several Ministers mentioned the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage as another key deliverable on the formal agenda, as well as the smooth continuation of work on the technical transparency items. A number of participants underlined the importance of gender equality and the role of empowered women in successfully implementing the of Paris Agreement. Because of the 2020 deadline for the update or submission of NDCs, many Ministers stressed the need to discuss implementation and enhancement of climate action as well as support at COP 25, and to follow up on the Climate Action Summit. The pre-2020 dialogue, the Climate Action Agenda, as well as additional events and initiatives under the guidance of the Chilean COP Presidency were mentioned in this context.

Session 2: Making progress on adaptation and resilience

German Parliamentary State Secretary Flachsbarth stressed the urgency for scaled up adaptation action, especially for those particularly vulnerable to climate change, and emphasized the need for enhanced cooperation in order to keep the SDGs within reach. Pointing to the reporting provisions adopted at COP 24, she highlighted the higher visibility of adaptation in the negotiation process. Some Ministers described Adaptation as a central issue not only for developing countries, but for all countries. Ministers described the urgent need for adaptation measures. Many underlined the advantages of sound adaptation planning, e.g. through National Adaptation Plans and pointed to the need for monitoring and reporting on progress. Some Ministers indicated that after the adoption of the Katowice Package it would be useful to discuss the development and presentation before 2020 of adaptation communications, as a significant step towards implementing Art. 7 of the Paris Agreement. Several Ministers from developing countries stressed capacity constraints and challenges in accessing and mobilizing adaptation finance as barriers to identify, prioritize and implement effective adaptation options. In this context, several Ministers mentioned the need for a balanced distribution between mitigation and adaptation finance. Several initiatives, such as the Global Commission on Adaptation and the InsuResilience Global Partnership, were mentioned as important vehicles to provide long-term vision and scale up innovative and transformative action, e.g. at the Climate Action Summit in September.

Session 3: Preparing for the Climate Action Summit

Special Envoy Ambassador de Alba presented the set-up and vision for the Climate Action Summit. He underlined the urgent need to significantly step up both concrete action and
headline targets in order to keep the targets of the Paris Agreement in reach. For the summit, he asked Ministers to “come with a plan, not with a speech” and to prepare bold commitments across the workstreams. Ministers welcomed the initiative of UN Secretary General Guterres and the mobilization of the UN-System and a large number of stakeholders in this context. Several Ministers announced that they were preparing significant new or upscaled commitments to be presented at the summit. Ministers underlined the need for a common signal on the enhancement of NDCs at the summit and several Ministers explained their willingness to take bolder and faster action on implementing and enhancing NDCs. Many Ministers pointed out that the summit will be decisive in order to make progress on adaptation, mitigation and support. A recurring theme was the importance to ensure a whole-of-society approach. In this context, several participants also highlighted the importance to include a wide range of stakeholders, especially subnational actors, the private sector and youth.

**Session 4: Preparing for the new reporting provisions under the climate change regime**

Ministers thanked the Polish Presidency of COP 24 for their skillful facilitation and for enabling parties to reach a very satisfactory result. A number of Ministers described how transparency provisions are crucial to implement good policies, attract investment, enable learning and build trust. Several Ministers from developing countries explained how current capacity constraints on the national level would lead to challenges in fully complying with the new rules in the future. They stressed that access to capacity building will be crucial to build up the necessary capacities and institutions in their countries in time. Some Ministers also mentioned the opportunities to learn from the current reporting system including the Biennial Update Reports as well as from frontrunner countries through south-south exchanges. Many Ministers therefore favored a “learning-by-doing” approach and Ministers from both developed and developing countries explained that they saw the work on transparency and reporting as a process of continuous improvement over time. The Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement (PATPA) or the Consultative Group of Experts were mentioned in this context. Many Ministers concluded that now is the time to build up or improve the necessary strong national institutions.

**Session 5: Financing and Implementing NDCs**

Ministers shared their views on financing and implementing NDCs, highlighting challenges at the national and international level. Several Ministers emphasized the need to put in place economic and political tools for the transition, which would require respective capacities in the countries as well as in international financial institutions. Three interrelated areas of work emerged in the discussions:

1) The improvement of international cooperation and support, e.g. through initiatives like the NDC-Partnership, or increased coordination between relevant funds
2) the implementation of governance provisions like climate laws with a need to mainstream climate considerations across all sectors and make the most of co-benefits of climate action, and
3) the alignment of financial flows with the Paris Agreement, e.g. via fiscal policies and a greening of the financial sector.

Several Ministers pointed to the necessity of coherent approaches with all actors of the government involved. In this respect, Ministers welcomed the recent establishment of the Finance Ministers Coalition on Climate Action and highlighted the importance of active participation of the Treasuries in the design and implementation of NDCs. They pointed out
that without adequate institutional frameworks and enabling environments, the shift of financial flows towards a climate neutral and climate-resilient society will not be successful. Ministers also highlighted the need to address market failures. Ministers from developing countries stressed the need for access to climate finance, support for capacity building and technology transfer and highlighted the crucial role of public finance to leverage private funds. Several Ministers highlighted the GCF replenishment in this context. Ministers from developed countries reiterated their commitment to fulfill the climate finance mobilization goal by 2020 and through to 2025 and highlighted their willingness to achieve their national climate finance targets. Some Ministers highlighted the importance of ensuring the efficient and effective work of the GCF.

Session 6: Improving and Updating NDCs

In light of the 2020-deadline to submit or update NDCs and to submit long-term strategies under the Paris Agreement, Ministers discussed concrete possibilities to improve NDCs. This includes the enhancement of headline targets, the inclusion of additional sectors or the inclusion of strengthened policies in the NDC. Prof. Rockström gave a sobering overview over the scientific facts and stressed the urgency to substantially raise ambition. He stressed that policy makers need to move from incremental to exponential action. Prof. Rockström and several Ministers highlighted the alarming update on the status of global ecosystems presented in the recent IPBES report and acknowledged the need to link climate action with natural ecosystem and biodiversity preservation. Ministers from developing countries explained that enhanced access to climate finance will facilitate the enhancement of ambition. A number of Ministers stressed the need for equity and pre-2020 action. Several Ministers pointed out that the NDCs should be improved in conjunction with the development of a long-term strategy, in order to send clear signals to businesses, the financial sector and citizens about the long-term direction of travel. In this context, several Ministers shared their domestic preparations to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and a number of Ministers announced enhanced support for the implementation and updating of NDCs, e.g. as part of the Climate Action Enhancement Package under the NDC-Partnership. Many Ministers mentioned the Climate Action Summit as an important milestone for establishing national processes for NDC-improvement.