

## Press Statement by WECF for the Women's and Gender Constituency, Bonn, 10 April 2010



**WECF** | Women in Europe for a Common Future

### The Copenhagen Accord – the way forward

**The Women and Gender constituency was discouraged by the COP15 outcomes, but committed to action.**

Bonn, April 10, 2010 - We are now in 2010 at the first climate change talks this year – dedicated to the process, which is indeed crucial as procedure and organization are held partly responsible for the failure of Copenhagen.

#### *What to do with the Copenhagen Accord?*

The Copenhagen Accord is not a legally binding agreement. With the voluntary engagements contracted by member states in the Copenhagen Accord, temperature would increase up to 4°C. Thus Copenhagen Accord doesn't fulfill the objective to contain global increase of temperature into a 2 °C limit. . This is of course unacceptable as we know that the lives of millions of people are at stake, entire nations are expected to disappear under the ocean, and we urgently need the commitment to necessary measures for an equitable, just and legally binding post-Kyoto agreement to tackle climate change.

But, the Copenhagen Accord is still a strong political agreement, a steppingstone towards an ultimate goal of agreeing on a single and comprehensive legal document, which establishes an international framework with participation by all parties. Thus, it can be considered as the guiding document to orientate the negotiations and it contains important elements which could serve as inputs to the negotiations and be translated into texts that could be incorporated in the negotiating text of the AWG-LCA, where appropriate. But lets be clear that the AWG-LCA documents are the basis for discussion, since these documents contain specific and relevant information that needs to be revisited.

#### *What are the procedural and organizational weaknesses ?*

**Procedure and organization** are held partly responsible for the failure of Copenhagen. Indeed, the method and means of negotiations have too often resulted in a slow and repeated circle, in which Parties continually restate positions, which are recaptured by the different Chairs. During the negotiations, delegates talk one after each other instead of responding to and taking into account other views, with a mutual, and good-faith, attempt to define common ground. Negotiators appear to have uncompromised mandates from their governments, making it hard for compromise. Consequently, there is no confidence between parties which have the feeling that the procedure doesn't respect broad and equal participation of parties.

#### *What are the solutions?*

**Having learned the hard lesson in Copenhagen**, we need to avoid repeating the same mistakes by seriously focus on the way forward to achieving a just and equitable outcome in Mexico. This is the purpose of this conference in Bonn, to focus on organizational matters in order to swiftly clearing procedural questions, and to prepare the ground for engaging into substantive discussions.

States shall ensure that the negotiating process:

- remains fully transparent, open, inclusive and efficient in delivering substantial outcomes.
- respects and accede to principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibility
- facilitates negotiations and the need to rebuild trust and confidence, credibility and legitimacy in the multilateral climate negotiating process for a constructive engagement.

**The Women's and Gender Constituency therefore calls for the following measures:**

- Negotiations shall stay through the UNFCCC framework to ensure a multilateral process based on consensus and bottom up approach. However, informal consultations are a necessity when substantive and critical differences

remain. In fact, Mexico is currently conducting informal dialogues with various Parties to discuss their particular interests; informal consultations are also a necessity to prepare a summit. They help to build trust between Parties because informal small-group meetings encourage a frank exchange of views towards a common substantive position, and are necessary to address and resolve critical differences, rather than restate them. The results of these meetings shall be communicated to other parties in order to ensure the inclusiveness and transparency of the process.

- There will be two tracks negotiations: AWG-LCA and AWG-KP. In order to ensure an efficient negotiation process, balanced progress must be made on both negotiating tracks in a way that will lead to two separate and balanced outcomes.
- Draft texts shall be transmitted to parties at least 2 week before the beginning of sessions

### ***Why is civil society crucial in the procedure and organization?***

#### **Civil society**

The involvement of civil society is crucial for a transparent, multilateral process. Women are one of the most vulnerable communities to climate change.

In Copenhagen, civil society was more or less rejected from the negotiations, which also contributed to the failure. Civil society inputs enrich, diversify, and include new points of view in the process. As Costa Rica suggested (I quote), “the resources saved by the Secretariat from maintaining Bonn as the venue for the meetings, could be used to finance the participation of an extra delegate from civil society”. Civil society brings transparency to the process and could bring new solutions. Civil Society’s role is to make sure that the interests of all groups of society, and future generations are taken into account, to counterbalance the dominating economic interests. Thus, we call for all the negotiations shall be opened to observers with some time for their interventions.

It is an important focus at a time when civil society tends to be expelled from the negotiation process. The USA said “ we suggest that the LCA Chair significantly reduce the number of discrete groups handling negotiating issues.” Saudi Arabia said “observer have to respect their observers position” Egypt deplored the fact that there was an informal meeting in february organized by an NGO.

The W&G Constituency therefore call for an improvement of all these procedural and organizational issues in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention which is the adoption of a comprehensive legally binding outcome in Cop 16 in Mexico in 2010, and to focus more on substantive discussions and avoid lengthy procedural discussions that could hinder progress in order to transfer words into acts and to ensure constructive negotiations so that states would be able to maintain the objective of keeping the global mean temperature increase below 2° C, in relation to the pre-industrial levels, according to the scientific information gathered and processed by the IPCC.

#### ***Conclusion***

Climate impacts require urgent attention and treatment by all Parties, another failure is possible in Mexico and this is why procedural issues have to be taken seriously. Bonn is also a good way for delegation to get back in touch, after a disastrous Copenhagen. This summit is a first step, a move on, an opportunity to rebuild trust and hope. Delegates and civil society have the capacity to create a clear consensus and tackle the climate change challenge.

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#### **Note for the editors:**

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