

At UN, developing nations urge boost in global support to fight climate change



Muhammad Mumuni, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana, addresses the general debate of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

28 September 2010 – Developing nations took to the podium today at the General Assembly’s annual high-level debate to press for greater global support in responding to climate change.

Ghanaian Foreign Minister Muhammad Mumuni **warned** world leaders that poorer nations may soon experience a “promise fatigue” if developed countries do not carry through pledged funds, including the \$30 billion of fast-track funding for developing countries through 2012 committed at December’s Copenhagen climate change meeting.

At the gathering in the Danish capital, industrialized countries further pledged to find ways and means to raise \$100 billion annually by 2020.

“For developing countries, the early delivery and transparent allocation of this money will boost our confidence in the dialogue and also show that industrialized countries are truly committed to progress in the broader negotiations,” Mr. Mumuni said.

Not only must developed countries honour their commitments to provide financial and technological to poorer nations in the fight against climate change, they must also “take the lead to cut their respective carbon dioxide emissions so that the conference in Cancun could produce tangible results,” **said** Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hor Namhong.

The next conference of parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**) is set to take place in the Mexican city in November.

“The fruitful outcomes in Cancun rely on efforts by all to save humankind from much more serious catastrophes,” the Cambodian official said.

Foreign Minister Maxine Pamela Ometa McClean of Barbados acknowledged that a comprehensive pact will not be achieved in Cancun, but **said** the November gathering must conclude with the world committing itself to prioritizing the most vulnerable and providing the fast-track funding.

“Critical to success at Cancun is arriving at a common understanding of how, when and where an ambitious and legally-binding international climate agreement will be finalized,” she stressed.

Theodore Brent Symonette, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Bahamas, **called** for special attention to be paid to the needs of small island developing States (**SIDS**) and other vulnerable countries.

The Bahamas, he said, is the fifth most vulnerable country to sea level rise. "We are a country of negligible greenhouse gas emissions, still we suffer catastrophic results of emissions are not stabilized and reduced worldwide."

According to science, a temperature rise of 2 degrees Celsius will result in the sea level rising two metres, Mr. Symonette said. "Such an occurrence will submerge 80 per cent of our territory."

Also calling for urgent action for SIDS today was Arvin Boolell, Foreign Minister of Mauritius.

With climate change inextricably linked to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (**MDGs**), the SIDS should be given simplified access to both fast-track and longer-term resources, he **emphasized**.

"Those adaptation fundings should be in the form of grants and not loans," Mr. Boolell added.

President Desiré Delano Bouterse of Suriname, in his address to the Assembly on Saturday, **said** that climate change will have a "devastating" effect on developing countries.

His country, he said, can serve as an example for the world "as its laws to save [forests] and biodiversity date back from the middle of the past century."

It is called the "greenest country on Earth" for its 90 per cent forest cover, Mr. Bouterse said.

"It seems that the standing forest and the wealth of Suriname's biodiversity are being taken for granted by the global community as there are no structures in place to provide incentives to continue on the path of sustainability," he said.

For his part, Grenada's Prime Minister Tillman Thomas **called** for climate change, which is already undermining small economies, to remain at the top of the global diplomatic and negotiating agenda.

Fast-track funding has only reach a small percentage of developing countries, and "clearly, this has to be corrected," especially for SIDS, he said.

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