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## **UN official urges governments to remain committed to goal of low-carbon economies**



Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Christina Figueres briefs press

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The top United Nations climate change official today urged governments to carry through their commitments to low-carbon and climate-resilient economies to address climate change, stressing that the forthcoming conference in the South African city of Durban will be an opportunity to take significant steps towards that goal.

“The world really expects governments to take the next significant steps in building an effective global system to address climate change in Durban,” said Christiana Figueres, the Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)).

Speaking to reporters at UN headquarters ahead of the [Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC](#) in Durban from 28 November to 9 December, Ms. Figueres spelled out the four steps that the governments would be required to take at that meeting.

The first one is finding a solution to the issue of the second commitment to the Kyoto Protocol, an addition to the UNFCCC that contains legally binding measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and whose first commitment period is due to expire next year.

“There has to be a clear decision as to how the global collective effort – not only of industrialized countries – but how the global collective effort to reduce emissions will go forward and how that will be done in a transparent manner, with greater ambition growing over time,” she said.

Secondly, Ms. Figueres said, governments will have to define the rules for the review of their climate change efforts to assess if they are good enough to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius.

Under agreements reached in Cancún, Mexico, last year, parties to the UNFCCC decided they would engage in a review starting in 2013. The rules of the review, however, need to be decided on before the reconsideration to ensure that the review itself will have firm scientific basis.

The Durban conference is also expected to establish clarity on climate financing. “I would say there are two big chapters. One is the approval of the first cut of the design of the Green Climate Fund, and the other is a process to ramp up climate finance up to the \$100 billion a year that was agreed to under the Cancun Agreements to be available by the year 2020, but certainly necessitating a gradual ramp-up,” said Ms. Figueres.

Governments will also be expected to make operational both the new climate change technology mechanism agreed in Cancún, as well as the adaptation committee, the institution that parties have developed to carry adaptation efforts forward.

Ms. Figueres said the presidents of Mexico and South Africa will be consulting with other heads of State gathered in New York for the high-level segment of the General Assembly session on the four steps, which she said are politically more contentious in the climate change negotiations.

“And it’s very clear that world leaders here will again see that they are in the deep midst of economic crisis. I certainly sympathize with that.

“However, it is also very clear that no matter what short-term solutions will be put in place by governments to deal with this current economic crisis, those solutions will not be able to maintain growth and stability throughout a longer period unless they are imbued within a global climate change solution,” said Ms. Figueres.

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