

Call for Party-driven, text-based negotiations for Paris agreement

Paris, 8 December (T Ajit) — Many developing countries called for Party-driven, text-based negotiations in an open setting during the first meeting of the 'Paris Committee' held on Monday, 7 December.

During the meeting which was held in the evening of Monday, Laurent Fabius, the French Foreign Minister and the UNFCCC's COP21 President, took stock of work of the minister-led informal consultations which began on Sunday, 6 December and outlined the mode of work for the rest of the week.

At the COP plenary on Saturday, 5 December, Parties had agreed that one single open-ended body would be established called the 'Comité de Paris' (Paris Committee), to carry out the consultations among Parties to make progress on the 21-page text for the Paris agreement which was transmitted from the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform on Enhanced Action (ADP) and to help facilitate compromise. The Paris Committee will come out with a document which is expected to be adopted by the COP on Friday, 11 December.

During the Paris Committee meeting, Fabius said that the ministers who were appointed as co-facilitators would continue to consult and listen to groups of Parties. "Work would intensify on 8 December and based on that, the facilitators, supported by the Secretariat and the Presidency, would propose a clean text with fewer options, which the Parties would need to look at collectively," he added. He reiterated that while there was a need to make headway, he would ensure the process continued to be Party-driven.

In the report back of the minister-led informals,

the ministers concerned said that they had sensed a great deal of convergence among Parties on various issues and also informed the Paris Committee that they had conducted several bilateral meetings with Parties and regional groups.

Speaking for the **Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC), Malaysia** said that after the bilateral meetings and the reflections by the co-facilitators, the next stage would be to have a reality check and to ensure, on a group basis (instead of having consultations in bilaterals), that the reflections of the co-facilitators capture the comprehensiveness and balance of the discussions.

Malaysia said that "we should have a wider group to look at their ideas of convergence and we should move to text-based negotiations or text-based reflections." It added that the LMDC had made very specific inputs into the text and instead of talking conceptually, the Group had made very specific inputs into the text. Malaysia stressed that a great deal of goodwill was being built, which was a good signal for the prospect of concluding work favourably.

(According to sources, the discussions in the minister-led informals have remained at the conceptual level rather than text-based negotiations.)

Cuba said Parties should move to a higher level of consultations and negotiations to avoid delay. Waiting till 9 December (Wednesday) may mean that Parties are racing against the clock. "It could happen tomorrow (Tuesday) and not in bilateral consultation formats," said Cuba. It called for more open processes and stressed that that was the only way Parties would come to a collective agreement. It called for the plan of 9 December (of

coming out with a text) to be moved to 8 December.

Cautioning against parallel processes, **Venezuela** also stressed there should not be bilateral meetings. Venezuela also sought clarity on when they would get the text and who was drafting the text. Like Cuba, Venezuela also said that the text needs to come out on 8 December. **Egypt** also wanted to know who would draft the text.

Tuvalu sought prior notice with regard to the bilateral meetings. **Georgia** also called for the participation of all the Parties in the process. Speaking for the **Independent Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean countries (AILAC)**, **Guatemala** said that the INDABA process worked in South Africa and that it would work in Paris. It stressed on the need to find common landing ground.

Marshall Islands, however, expressed concern about the LMDC proposal and said that they had passed the point for such procedures. It said Parties need to trust their ministers and the Presidency to help deliver an agreement.

Speaking in its national capacity, **South Africa** proposed that textual options must be developed based on ministerial consultations and with the help of the co-facilitators of the ADP. South Africa called for such textual proposals to be discussed in an open-ended forum for the ministers to consider their options by Wednesday, 9 December so that the legal and linguistic committee could complete work by Friday, 11 December.

The European Union said given the complexity, line-by-line negotiations was not feasible. It said that it could not allow process issues, which had been a block at the negotiators' level, to block progress on what the ministers could do.

COP21 President Fabius said that he had heard all the proposals and that they would have to be efficient. He said he would like the drafting to

begin at some point and would look for a solution that could be applied to all. He also said that there would be another session of the Paris Committee in the afternoon of 8 December, where further details on the mode of work would be proposed.

Fabius further said that consultations on adaptation and loss and damage, led by ministers from Bolivia and Sweden, would begin on 8 December. He outlined that there would also be facilitations on cooperative mechanisms, led by Canada and on forests led by Ecuador. Their co-facilitators' names would be announced soon, he said. A working group on response measures would also be created, Fabius said, adding that the work would be intensifying this week and that he would appoint more facilitators, depending on the need.

Report-back on minister-led informals

Four groups were [launched](#) on Saturday, 5 December after the ADP handed over its work to the COP21 Presidency. The four consultation groups were on support (means of implementation—finance, technology development and transfer and capacity building) facilitated by ministers from Gabon and Germany; differentiation, with regard to mitigation, finance and transparency, facilitated by ministers from Brazil and Singapore; ambition, including long-term objective and periodic review, facilitated by ministers from Norway and St Lucia; and pre-2020 action or Workstream 2, facilitated by ministers from Gambia and the UK.

While the ministers reported back to the Paris Committee on progress made in the informals, they also said that they had had a number of bilateral meetings with Parties and regional groups. The [reports](#) from the minister-led informal consultations are available on the UNFCCC website:

http://unfccc.int/meetings/paris_nov_2015/in-session/items/9320.php