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**Equity is a priority issue in first global stocktake
– say developing countries**

Kathmandu, 22 June (Perna Bomzan): As preparatory work for the first global stocktake (GST) under the Paris Agreement (PA) is underway, developing countries highlighted ‘equity’ as a priority issue, both in the process and substance of the GST as it plays its proper role in the assessment of progress in achieving the PA goals.

(Article 14 of the PA provides for a GST every five years to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the PA and its long-term goals. The first GST (GST1) will take place in 2023 and is supposed to be undertaken in a comprehensive and facilitative manner, considering mitigation, adaptation and the means of implementation and support, and in the light of equity and the best available science. The outcome of the GST will inform Parties in updating and enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, their actions and support. In 2018, Parties agreed that equity and the best available science will be considered throughout the GST process which will consist of the following three components: information collection and preparation; technical assessment; and consideration of outputs).

At an information event convened on 15 June by the Chairs of the UNFCCC’s Subsidiary Bodies (SBs), **Guinea** speaking for the **G77 and China** stressed “as equity is, together with reliance on the best available science, an overarching foundational principle for the GST, this should be reflected in both process and substance”.

The event on preparations for the GST1, SBSTA) during the virtual climate talks under the SBs was presided over by **SBI Chair Marianne Karlsen (Norway)** and **SBSTA Chair Tosi Mpanu Mpanu (Democratic Republic of Congo)**, who introduced a [non-paper](#) prepared under their own responsibility in response to the requests by Parties,

and agreed to in 2018: “(i) To organise the GST in a flexible and appropriate manner, to work on identifying opportunities for learning-by-doing, including for assessing collective progress, and to take the necessary steps for the consideration of inputs as they become available; (ii) To develop guiding questions for all components of the GST, including specific thematic and cross-cutting questions, one session of the subsidiary bodies prior to the relevant activities under the GST being carried out”.

The non-paper focused on guiding questions for the information collection and preparation component of the GST. The guiding questions includes specific thematic questions for the three thematic areas of mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and support as well as cross-cutting questions. The non-paper also contains elaborative sections on the above-mentioned requests as well as timelines.

Guinea for the **G77/China** stated that while the non-paper was comprehensive, some priority issues that are of key to developing countries have not been given adequate or balanced treatment. These include equity in both outcome and process, adaptation (including the global goal for adaptation), means of implementation (separately for finance, technology transfer, and capacity building), (the impact of) response measures, and loss and damage, including in the guiding questions that are being proposed, explained Guinea.

It said equity in the process means that participation by Parties and other stakeholders must be equitable; that is, those that have greater difficulty or less capacity to provide inputs should be assisted in doing so, and called for technical support to be further detailed, informing that it had provided concrete proposals in this regard, which

require corresponding budget allocations be provided for in the 2022-2023 programme budget of the UNFCCC secretariat.

As regards equity in substance, Guinea said that it requires a holistic and cross-cutting collection and assessment of the information obtained for the GST from all sources of inputs, so that the technical assessment and political consideration of the outcome will also have substantive equity as a key element. Doing so will help ensure that the outcome of the GST is equitable, looking backward at implementation gaps and challenges (including with respect to historical responsibility and pre-2020 implementation of the Convention and its related instruments), what has been done, what has not yet been done, and how these would be addressed in a forward looking and equitably ambitious manner in the various areas, taking into account the underlying principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), in light of different national circumstances, and in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Such a substantive equity-based outcome would be the best way to enable the GST to inform Parties as they prepare their next nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and enhance international cooperation.

Ghana for the **African Group** also expected equity to feature a lot more prominently in the process and substance than what is currently existing in the non-paper, adding that another area equity that needs to be considered is that of 'just transition', and part of its focus should be an assessment of how support provided has enabled a just transition in all developing countries, it said further. In terms of process, it said that if the GST is to be enriched by the knowledge and experience of non-Party stakeholders like local communities and indigenous peoples especially in developing countries, then more proactive measures should be deployed to help them generate the inputs that could feed the GST and this support could be managed by the Secretariat.

Ghana also said that there were deficient aspects in the non-paper stressing that the elements on finance do not reflect the ecosystem of obligations and actions for finance across the PA. It said that the GST should also focus on efforts and progress made in the delivery of the obligations (under Articles 9.1 and 9.3) by developed countries as the level of the efforts has a direct impact as enhanced support for

developing countries is required for effective PA implementation and will allow for higher ambition in their actions. On the global goal on adaptation, it questioned how Parties can enhance ambition on adaptation, both of actions and of support and what work on metrics would be needed to better understand progress. It also pointed out that the objective or outcome of the GST should stand out clearly with the global response informed by the findings underpinned by the best available science and based on the principles of CBDR-RC, in light of different national circumstances, and in the context of sustainable development, poverty eradication and social justice.

India for the **Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** highlighted that equity is not a consideration of fairness but it is the benchmark to measure fairness and ambition, adding that it has repeatedly reiterated that equity as a guiding and overarching principle of the Convention and the PA and needs to be operationalised in each component of the GST and the work on GST therefore must reflect this. It said that the non-paper has been unable to capture the incorporation of equity in concrete terms. There is a unique opportunity to develop guidance on key criteria and metrics (i.e. equity indicators) that evaluate the fairness and equity of climate contributions based on national circumstances and capabilities. This guidance should be drawn from the criteria and metrics / indicators already communicated by Parties in their NDCs and they can thereafter decide if and how such indicators could be applied in subsequent GSTs. The LMDC it said is happy to provide a repository of these indicators.

India further pointed out that as the GST is an ambition assessment tool, then a very important aspect missing from the ambit of the non-paper is the assessment of leadership and enhancement of ambition and commitments by the developed countries in fulfilling the pre-2020 commitments. It reiterated that at the aggregate level, pre-2020 commitments have not been met in terms of mitigation and support provided. The pre-2020 shortfall will persist in 2023 in time of the first GST. Therefore, reports submitted by Parties in relation to their actions for the pre-2020 period undertaken must be incorporated in the work on GST going forward. This is important towards historical responsibility in terms of collective assessment of cumulative past emissions of developed country Parties, it added.

Brazil for Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay (ABU) stressed the need to ensure that the outcome of the GST is equitable, looking backward at implementation gaps and challenges, especially regarding pre-2020 implementation.

Saudi Arabia for the **Arab Group** emphasized on the role of the constituted bodies and forums especially the forum on response measures and said that the non-paper did not include the outcome of the GST and how to deal with it. It also called for a clearer language in the non-paper being prepared under the responsibility of the SB Chairs and that its elements are non-exhaustive, have no formal status and should not be considered as final in any way.

Panama for the **Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)** stressed that establishing an analytical approach for the technical assessment, that refers to the best available science to frame guidance about future action, is a pressing task for the adequate preparation of the GST and that the approach must balance backward-looking fact gathering with forward-looking analysis that asks critical questions framed by the latest scientific and technical understanding of the transformational changes needed to be undertaken. It raised concerns that the SB Chairs have failed to integrate within the GST design, accepted scientific concepts that would enable the GST to deliver elements to guide towards a vision of transformational change. It called for the appropriate consideration of science as an input to the design and framing of the GST in all its components.

Antigua and Barbuda for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** made two points – first on challenges and barriers, it said it is important to address what is forward-looking, keeping in mind that GST is ratcheting up of ambition across adaptation, mitigation and means of implementation. Secondly, in consolidating and summarising inputs, it stressed the need to retain background and context, including links to mandates and operational arrangements in relation to inputs by constituted bodies.

Bhutan for the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** emphasized that the GST will be key to overall progress and implementation of the NDCs. It said that the GST should have both forward-looking and backward-looking aspects with the current non-paper not being balanced, urging the

incorporation of the former aspect in the context of the goal of the PA which can be supported by scientific reports. It asked to follow the mandate without going beyond than agreed earlier and also stressed on a Party-driven process, along with the participation of non-Party stakeholders whose inputs will be important.

The **European Union (EU)** said that the non-paper provided a valuable basis as a tool to prepare for the GST1 process and called for not leading to changing or renegotiating the important balance agreed before. It stated the GST provided opportunity every five years to look collectively so far and on what needs to be done. It stated the GST's two functions of taking stock of PA implementation to assess the collective goal and the opportunity to enhance support and action, the second part being forward-looking. The guiding questions should be along these lines and appropriate for all three thematic areas. It also stated concerns on the means of implementation and support, stressing that questions related to finance flows (Article 2.1c) needs to be on equal footing with other related long-term goals (Articles 2.1a and 2.1b) thus calling for questions related to finance flows to be moved from the crosscutting area to means of implementation and support thematic area. It pointed out further that in relation to questions on the adaptation thematic area, they do not correctly reflect the mandates.

Canada said that the non-paper should not rewrite or reinterpret what is already agreed to and that Article 2.1c (on finance flows) need to be considered on equal footing with the other long-term goals. It also echoed the need to ensure various mandates and references are more delineated on questions related to the adaptation thematic area. It emphasised contributions from non-Parties and observer organisations and how their inputs are integrated into the process.

The **United States (US)** welcomed the online portal organised by thematic areas further suggesting that non-Party stakeholders could be organised in such a manner through multimedia and other online tools, by more than written submissions. It also emphasized on reports by constituted bodies as per their area of expertise and agreed on the need for more forward-looking questions. It echoed with the EU on questions related to Article 2.1c as well, not seeing it as a crosscutting issue.

Australia said that overall, the non-paper was fit for purpose and agreed with the guiding questions to be general. It also said that the reports of the constituted bodies sticking to their area of work. It looked forward to the three technical dialogues and the treatment of the three thematic areas of mitigation, adaptation, means of implementation and support, in a balanced way.

South Africa also stressed on the crucial issues of equity and pre-2020 commitments. It laid stress on the fact that the GST is the centre-piece of efforts to ratchet up ambition collectively under the UNFCCC process. Given that there is no internationally agreed definition of climate finance, it posed a question to the EU, Canada and the US on from where they were deriving their answers in relation to the financial flows issue of Article 2.1c. It cautioned against getting into negotiating positions, thus to avoid politicisation or contestation at a critical phase which is technical, relating to data.

China said the GST input sources and outcomes should be inclusive and that adaptation, finance, technology transfer are essential elements to make the GST a comprehensive, inclusive one. It highlighted the need to have a comprehensive understanding of ambition which not only means ambition of action and target pledges but more importantly, ambition on the means of implementation and progress made, especially finance and technology support provided to developing countries. It made a point that when assessing the collective progress to reach the long-term global goals, we must bear in mind that before we look forward we need to look backward to learn lessons from the past, to understand the historic responsibilities and implementation and progress made towards previous pledges.

Switzerland said that the technical dialogues have the most important role and welcomed the general approach and timelines including the role of observer organisations. It also echoed other developed country speakers on the issue of moving questions related to financial flows and Article 2.1c into from the cross-cutting section to the thematic area of means of implementation and support, stressing the equal footing with Articles 2.1a and 2.1b.

Japan said the non-paper served as a very good basis and supported more forward-looking guiding

questions. It also emphasised equal treatment of all three thematic areas.

In closing, SBI Chair **Karlsen** summed up the key points coming out of the discussion, inviting further inputs and submissions anytime while moving forward. SBSTA Chair **Mpanu** informed about further developing the non-paper taking into account all views expressed. He also shared the forthcoming plan to hold another informal meeting in Glasgow at COP26 (the 26th meeting of the UNFCCC's Conference of Parties) on the revised non-paper with a focus on developing guiding questions for the technical assessment component of the GST1 process.

More information about the outcomes and negotiations at UNFCCC from 2007 to 2019: <https://tinyurl.com/3p6tw5vx>