

5th January 2010

Post Copenhagen Climate Summit - comment

The 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as the 'Copenhagen Summit', was held at the Bella Center in Copenhagen, Denmark, between 7 December and 18 December. After long meetings, 26 countries led by President Obama agreed upon the 'Copenhagen Accord'. The accord was drafted on the final day by the United States; China; India; Brazil and; South Africa and adjudged a "meaningful agreement" by the United States government. The Copenhagen Accord agreed to limit global warming to 2 degrees C above pre-industrial temperatures and called for joint supportive action by both developed and developing countries although it was unclear how proposed target will be achieved.

The accord which is not legally binding specifies the developed countries will provide the financial and technological funds support for capacity building, mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries. Some island states' and African countries' need for support was highlighted.

According to the Copenhagen Accord, US\$30 billion for the period 2010-2012 will be provided, and long-term finance of a further US\$100 billion a year by 2020 will be mobilized from a variety of sources. The EU made a promise of 10,6 billion dollars, Japan 11 billion dollars and the US 3,6 billion dollars of financial help.

The Accord established four new bodies:

1. Mechanism on REDD-plus.
2. High-Level Panel under the COP to study the implementation of financing provisions,
3. Copenhagen Green Climate Fund
4. Technology Mechanism.

The accord attached two appendixes as related to greenhouse gas emissions:

1. "The targets of the developed countries" and
2. "Voluntary commitments of the leading developing countries".

The supervision of emissions was one of the most debated issues. China opposed any form of international supervision.

The accord specifies that the developing countries' mitigation actions shall be observed and communicated through national communications every two years.

It is also agreed that deforestation and forest degradation have caused a significant increase in greenhouse gas emissions and the need of developed countries' support is required to prevent further deterioration.

On the other hand, the accord clearly has uncertainties being seen as rather "weak" by the developing world as the Developed countries did not commit themselves to legally binding emission cuts in Copenhagen. Both developing and developed countries agreed to co-

operate without any legal commitments. With no firm target for limiting the global temperature rise coupled by none commitment to a legally binding treaty, those countries most vulnerable to climate impacts did not get the deal they wanted.

TURKEY'S POSITION:

In the second week of the summit Turkey introduced its "National Strategic Plan on Climate Change". The desire of the Turkish delegation not to give any binding commitment to the summit was observed widely as being disappointing despite much positive rhetorical comment by the Turkish delegation. During COP15 Turkey avoided answering specifically questions raised concerning the post 2012 period.

The National Strategy on Climate Change Document includes Turkey's special conditions and efforts to combat the GHG emissions. The document specifies Turkey's short, medium and long term projects to control the emissions.

The short term plan will give priority to energy efficiency by encouraging the use of sustainable energy efficient materials in the construction of new buildings. Also, Turkey committed to address regionalization of hot water; heating and; electricity production and consumption in an effort to prevent losses incurred during electricity transmission.

In the medium term (1-3 years) it is planned to assess the potential of industrial energy efficiency savings available through encouragement programs aimed at prioritizing energy efficiency usage of appropriate technology and building materials.. In the document, it is asserted that every encouragement will be given to use low and zero emission technologies such as renewable and nuclear energy.

The government undertook to support sustainable energy research and development aimed at providing clean technology through support to include the national energy industry. Innovation together with research and development will give encouragement to the deployment and use of new and alternative fuels sources. Existing thermal power plants will be redeveloped toward cleaner energy production.

In the long term (3-10 years) the density of energy shall be decreased to lower levels than in 2004. The local energy resources such as coal, hydro, wind, geothermal and solar energy will be used regarding the energy supply security and climate change goals. The percentage of renewable energy in total electrical energy production will be raised to 25% by 2020. The energy efficiency practices in industrial sector and specified savings potential will be realized. Importance is given to the continuance of the transition to a global hydrogen economy.

Turkish President Abdullah Gul in his speech mentioned that Turkey needs financial and technological help from developed countries. He affirmed that Turkey is eager to be included in a fair, transparent and achievable climate framework in the post-2012 period. He did not mention any specific target on GHG emission reductions mentioning the average per capita income, energy consumption per capita and GHG emissions reflect Turkey as a 'mediocre' developing country which continues to separate it from other Annex 1 countries.

Consequently, Turkey desires to be recognized as requiring 'special conditions' and to continue to be included in the list of developing countries qualifying to receive financial and technological transfer. Turkey did not make any pledge for emission reduction commitment at this time. Inclusion of coal energy in Turkey's climate strategy is not understood as the focus should be on renewable energy resources and energy efficiency.

Overall, it is frustrating to see that the result of the long road taken after Kyoto Protocol which entered into force on 16 February 2005 as being brought down to a five page non legally binding document containing just twelve articles. Those who believed the outcome of the Copenhagen climate conference would result in a legally binding agreement were disappointed as they had hoped the summit would shape the future.

The Copenhagen Accord was "recognized" by all the participating countries but not passed unanimously. Leaders of industrialised countries were pleased with this agreement but many leaders of other countries and non-governmental organisations were opposed to it.

As for Turkey, by making no contribution to the process it did not use its true negotiating power preferring to wait and see!

Brian P de Thorpe Millard
Chairman & CEO