



Growing consensus, joint actions



XIE ZHENHUA
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Vice Chairman,
National Development
and Reform Commission,
PRC

People representing governments, NGOs, media and other relevant stakeholders are gathering in the beautiful city of Durban for the COP17/CMP7 United Nations negotiations on climate change. After years of endless efforts — and in adherence to the UN framework and the principle of consensus — governments agreed on establishing the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol, forming the basis for the international legal form and institutions of global cooperation in addressing climate change. The Bali Roadmap set up a process to enable full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention and the Protocol. Last year, the Cancun Conference took a successful step in implementing the Roadmap and the international community now has expectations of achieving positive outcomes in Durban.

The Durban Conference should continue to follow the two-track approach to make progress in the implementation of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, which should be governed by the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and be conducted in an open, transparent, inclusive and party-driven process. Pursuant to the mandate of the Bali Roadmap, the conference should, on the one hand, implement the consensus reached in the Cancun Conference and define the detailed arrangements for such issues as finance, technology transfer and adaptation — and, on the other hand, continue the negotiation on unsolved issues left from Cancun and further develop a comprehensive and balanced outcome.

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With genuine concern, we hope that outcomes in three aspects can be achieved in Durban. Firstly, the conference should determine the emission reduction arrangement for the developed countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol under its second commitment period. Such a decision is the most crucial task, absolutely critical for the success of the conference. Secondly, it should decide on the arrangements for developed countries that are not Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to undertake comparable emission reduction commitments under the Convention in terms of nature, magnitude and compliance procedures. And thirdly, the conference should further discuss and operationalise relevant mechanisms for adaptation, finance, technology transfer and measurement reporting and verification capacity-building — as well as arrangements on MRV and transparency which differentiate developed and developing countries. Under such circumstances, developing countries should, under the framework of sustainable development, carry out appropriate mitigation actions with financial and technological assistance from developed ones.

China has always given great attention to climate change and prioritised combating it as one of the grand and consistent strategies for its economic and social development. As a developing country, China faces arduous tasks of developing the economy, eradicating poverty, realizing industrialization and urbanization, and improving people’s livelihoods. Despite these

demanding tasks, however, China has been, is and always will be active in taking practical actions to address climate change.

China reduced its energy consumption per unit of GDP by 19.1 per cent during the 11th Five-Year Plan period. It has also pledged to fulfill a goal of reducing its economy’s carbon intensity by 40 to 45 per cent by 2020 compared to 2005 level. To realize this goal, China has set a series of binding domestic targets in its 12th Five-Year Plan, including reducing energy consumption and CO₂ emissions per unit of GDP by 16 per cent and 17 per cent, respectively, from 2010 levels by 2015, and raising the non-fossil fuel share of primary energy up to 11.4 per cent.

China has also introduced measures to fulfill these targets, such as: intensifying accountability; optimizing industrial and energy structures; implementing pilot projects; enhancing energy saving and low carbon management; promoting the circular economy; encouraging research, development, dissemination and application of low carbon

technologies; perfecting relevant economic policy; expanding low carbon pilot projects; and improving relevant institutions and mechanisms. These policies and actions demonstrate the Chinese government’s devotion to combating climate change and its dedication to accelerating its green low-carbon development.

Climate change is indeed one of the most crucial humanitarian challenges of our time, given its wide array of impacts on, and interactions with the well-being of all people and with development in all nation states. What we have achieved so far was hard-earned, and to reach an effective solution to combat climate challenge in future remains a difficult task. While calling for joint efforts of all countries, there is a need to take into consideration the different historical responsibilities, capabilities and national development process of each of them.

For the best interests of human beings, we gather side-by-side to strengthen the current outcomes, realise our promises, establish mutual political trust and reach a new consensus with the aim of enhancing cooperation to advance the comprehensive, effective and sustained implementation of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, implement the Bali Roadmap and the Cancun Agreement, and boost a comprehensive, balanced and positive outcome in Durban. China is willing to work together with the international community to protect our planet and create a better future.