



## **ARGÜELLO: MULTILATERALISM IS AT STAKE**

**Panama City, Panama, 4 October 2011**

**"This is a negotiation that demands political will from the leaders of all countries. It is a very difficult negotiation, and having South Africa at the helm of the COP17 is no doubt very positive", said the Chair of the Group of 77 and China.**

Ambassador Jorge Argüello, Chair of the Group of 77 and China, met yesterday with the Foreign Minister of South Africa, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, during the last resumed session of the process before the Climate Summit COP17. Minister Nkoana-Mashabane arrived in Panama on Monday 3 to participate in the meeting in her capacity as incoming president of the 17th Conference of Parties (COP17) which would take place in Durban later this year.

"We have had a very productive and positive meeting", said Amb. Argüello. "I am very encouraged by the determination of the Minister to help all parties work towards a meaningful outcome in Durban, even in the short time we have."

The incoming President of COP17 also met with the plenary of the Group of 77 and China today. "South Africa permanent contact with the Chair and the Group, including several meetings with the plenary of G77 in Bonn, New York and now Panama, is a clear acknowledgement of the Group as a key player in these negotiations. We could not have expected less of South Africa, and I once again had the pleasure to reassure the Minister of the full commitment of the Group to support her country in making this African Climate Summit a definitive step forward in the right direction".

The Group of 77 and China reiterate the basis for fruitful negotiations must include: the preservation of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, in keeping with the Bali road map and the two tracks of negotiation agreed.

The Group of 77 and China calls all parties to respect their obligations and agreements under this multilateral framework. The defense of multilateralism must go beyond words, this is a tool that has proved beneficial to all humanity and, definitively, to developing countries.

Much as some rich countries like to repeat that discussing scenarios that they oppose is not "realistic" or "practical", they must recognize that there is no point in insisting on a solution outside of the Kyoto Protocol when 132 parties have strongly declared they can only accept a second commitment period as a

meaningful outcome.

"I think most parties understand by now that a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol is key for any positive outcome we can expect in Durban. I had the chance to update the incoming President of COP17 on the thinking of our Group and our firm commitment to that end."

"The second commitment period is paramount for the G77 and China", said the Chair, Amb. Argüello. "We are ready to negotiate and to produce actual texts in both tracks, but only on such a basis that respects our position as well as others. The elements are in place, we now have to translate this into an express political commitment from the developed countries."

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