

Pre-COP Consultations Copenhagen, 17 November 2009. Address by Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen

Check against delivery

Thank you for this opportunity to address the pre-COP consultations. I know Connie has made you work hard at this meeting as well as at previous sessions of the Greenland Dialogue. Hard work and political will is the only way forward – and it is not over yet.

I am just back from a meeting with leaders gathered for the APEC Summit in Singapore. We had a very encouraging discussion. And we reminded ourselves of the mandates and the deadline set at Bali.

I presented the vision for an ambitious, binding agreement in Copenhagen. An agreement providing for immediate and strong action within all areas of the Bali mandates. And setting us on track for a comprehensive legal framework.

I am pleased with the positive response I got. Also the American President endorsed our approach, implying that all developed countries will need to bring strong reduction targets to the negotiating table in Copenhagen.

Part of the press reports has focused on the fact that Copenhagen is not likely to conclude all aspects of a new legal deal. That will be no surprise to any of you familiar with the status of the negotiations. My focus remains the real commitments we can obtain for strong and specific action, both in the short and in the longer term.

Thus: Real action and a strong mandate and a time frame for further work on the legal framework to be concluded as soon as possible.

The positive response and the political commitment I hear from leaders from around the world gives me hope for Copenhagen. I am also encouraged by the discussions between ministers in this room. Leaders expect a positive outcome and that provides the strongest possible impetus to you. The job is to translate political will into political action in Copenhagen.

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I believe we agree that in Copenhagen we must - and I believe we can - deliver on the substance. Copenhagen should neither be a stopover nor a tiny steppingstone as some proclaim. Let there be no doubt about our intentions.

Given the time factor and the situation of individual countries, we must in the coming weeks focus on what is possible, and not let ourselves be distracted by what is not possible.

The Copenhagen Agreement should capture progress already achieved in the negotiations, and at the same time provide for immediate action already from next year.

The Copenhagen Agreement should be concrete and binding on countries committing to reach targets, to undertake actions, and to provide agreed finance. Of course, developed countries must

take lead by delivering substantial reductions and finance. We need numbers on the table in Copenhagen.

Finally, as I have mentioned, the Copenhagen Agreement should mandate continued negotiations for a legal outcome and set a deadline for the conclusion. The Danish Government firmly believes we should have a legal framework agreed. Sooner rather than later.

So why not a legally binding text in Copenhagen? Because the time and the diverging positions of the parties, as well as the number of possible outstanding issues to be resolved, will not allow for it to happen. But that must not be an excuse for inaction.

You may ask whether a Copenhagen agreement, which is political in nature, will prevent us from ever getting a legal agreement. No, I don't think so. The stronger our politically binding agreement in Copenhagen, the faster the progress toward a new legally binding, global climate regime.

What about Kyoto? Is Denmark ready to sacrifice it? Again, the answer is no. Denmark is a party to the Kyoto Protocol and will remain so. Negotiations after Copenhagen towards a legally binding regime should keep all options open, including a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol.

I fully understand the concerns expressed in regard to the form of the agreement. But I would also like to stress that the answer is not to postpone action until a legal regime is agreed, signed, ratified and effective.

Many of us are already committed to act. So why wait? Why refuse to do what we can agree to do already by Copenhagen?

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That is why, Denmark has set out the vision of "one Agreement – two purposes".

Firstly, the Copenhagen Agreement should have a solid content covering all the Bali building blocks: shared vision, mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building. This will provide a strong impetus and guidance to further negotiations on a legal framework.

Secondly, the agreement should provide for immediate action in all areas, including mitigation, adaptation and finance. Significant up-front finance should support early adaptation and mitigation efforts as well as capacity building and technology cooperation.

Will it be ambitious? Yes it will indeed. The overall aim will be to conclude a binding agreement that will set the path to limit global warming to a maximum of 2 degrees Celsius as recommended by science.

Will it divert from the agreed principles and instruments? No absolutely not. The agreement will build on already agreed legal instruments and principles. Its very foundation will be the principle of a common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities.

Will it only be a partial agreement? No – we cannot do half a deal in Copenhagen and postpone the rest till later. The agreement will cover all the key issues and all parts of the Bali mandates. I do not

share the view that it will be possible in Copenhagen to do some parts of the deal and not the other. We need the commitments. We need the figures. We need the action.

Will it be binding? Yes – it will be binding. Even if we may not hammer out the last dot's of a legally binding instrument, I do believe a politically binding agreement with specific commitments to mitigation and finance provides a strong basis for immediate action in the years to come.

I am not talking about a political declaration with niceties, but a decision among all Parties that includes precise language on all aspects of the Bali mandates: Commitment of developed countries to reductions and of developing countries to actions. Strong provisions on adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building, including up-front finance for early action.

Beneath that we will have underlying annexes outlining the specific commitments of individual countries. These will be negotiated and they will be subject to a transparent system of measurement, reporting and verification.

Furthermore, we will have a number of decisions covering in more detail some of the Bali elements, unfolding the adaptation framework, the technology mechanism as well as other issues.

We are not aiming to let anyone off the hook. We are trying to create a framework that will allow everybody to commit.

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It is my firm view that the vision I have outlined to you is not one among many possible ways ahead. It may well be the only one.

Some of you have wished for a different form or for a different legal structure. Still, I believe you will agree with me on one fundamental point: What matters at the end of the day is the ability of the Copenhagen Agreement to capture and reinforce global commitment to real actions.

Equity and realism must guide our efforts. We should not look for another international declaration of intent but strive for an agreement to commit.

As you know I have invited leaders to conclude COP15 at the Summit level. I look forward to welcoming all of you.

Thank you.