

The EU held a press conference at the Barcelona climate talks on November 4 at 14:00 CET

Anders Turesson, the chief climate negotiator for Sweden which holds the EU Presidency, Artur Runge-Metzger, the European Unions chief climate negotiator and Alicia Montalvo, the chief negotiator from Spain, gave a brief overview of the status of negotiations and answered questions on positions taken by the African Group, finance mechanism and the role of developing nations in the negotiations among others.

Following are elected excerpts from the press conference transcripts

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Turesson said:

“The EU want an ambitious, comprehensive, in the true sense of the word- global, multilateral and legally binding agreement. We want this to be ambitious and we are ready to take our share of all efforts that need to be done. The EU has since long declared that we are going to reduce our emissions by 30% until 2020 compared to 1990 figures if we get a good deal at Copenhagen. But regardless of what will happen at Copenhagen we will reduce emissions by 20% in 2020 compared to 1990 levels.

During the meeting on October 29th and 30th, the leaders of the EU have also been more precise on what the EU wish to do on a long term basis and have formulated our long term target- its going to be 80-95% for the EU compared to 1990 figures. Our leaders have also agreed upon a financial package and explained that the total sum need for adaptation and mitigation will be \$100 billion a year. It is an ambitious package and is a package that the EU has estimated”

Commenting on the demands by the African Group to suspend all negotiations until mitigation targets had been set by the Annex I nations, Ambassador Turesson said:

“Discussions are taking place in numerous groups right now. The impasse we had yesterday seems to have been overcome and we are content with that. We share many of the concerns of the AG but we believe it is necessary to discuss on all fronts right now. We cannot waste or lose time in this process. I would say time is already scarce and we cannot lose 1 minute. We have to work hard here in Barcelona and onwards.”

Ambassador Metzger elaborated on the agreement reached between the African Group and the EU on the issue of negotiations in the AWG-KP:

“... We had a long meeting yesterday afternoon where they (the African Group) were explaining what the issues were they wanted to discuss in more depth. And later we had a meeting with the KP Chair – John Ashe to sort out how we can deal with this and I think the agreement we have found is that we will devote more time to discuss the emission reduction figures of Annex I parties, the industrialized countries. And what was also wished from by the African side was to have a better explanation, a better understanding on how the emission reduction figures are being composed of... In the morning we had explanations from Australia and also from our side in very much detail on what that would mean. We hope that in this way we can smoothen the way forward on the discussions on the Kyoto Protocol side and the work is going to accelerate and the pace is going to accelerate in the next days.

“I think another aspect to that of course is that Africa is clearly pointing to issue of impacts of climate change on Africa. I think also there we take their concerns into account. If you look at our financial package which we have put on to the table there is a significant amount of money that would be spent on adaptation and that is going particularly to countries in Africa, the LDCs in order to assist them as quickly as possible. And that’s another reason we need to come with a conclusion at Copenhagen in order to address those issues. To make them adapt so that nobody will have to die in the end.”

Answering a question on whether the EU agreed with the African Group that there was no point in negotiating on issues other than numbers, Ambassador Metzger said:

The numbers are politically the hardest part of the entire deal. You cannot expect the hardest part of the entire deal to be done in Barcelona or in first days of Copenhagen. It is certainly something that will be left to ministers to decide or if need be even heads of states.”

Answering questions on the financial structure envisaged and demands from the G77 and China that adaptation and mitigation finance should come from public funds Ambassador Turesson said:

“We claim that the figure we have come up with do actually suffice. They must be considered incremental that is imp. In fact they are catalytical- they will steer the direction of much larger flows of investment. That is imp to keep in mind. One of the strongest tools for steering investments is in fact carbon markets and therefore they should be used as much as possible. But of course there must be an element of public money.”

Ambassador Montalvo added:

“I think we should think in the very long term and the transformation of the economic and growth models need also to mobilize financial flows. So I would like to insist in this role that public finance will be necessary but also has to play a catalytic role to make private finance also to promote this change in the long term.”

Ambassador Metzger commented on the fair share of the EU to adaptation and mitigation finance:

“We have made some assertions in the council conclusions on what we should calculate that on. We talk about emissions or GDP - that means the wealth of the EU. If you look at emissions the EU’s emissions are somewhere around 10% of the global emissions. So if you take the 50 billion that has been mentioned as public finance fro 2020 that could be as low as 5 billion. If you calculate on the basis of GDP where we have a share of about 30% globally then it could be up to 15 billion per year . . . But it depends on negotiations on how is this key going to be established and what will be the final decision in the end.”

Answering a question on the role of large developing countries like Brazil in the negotiations, Ambassador Turesson said:

“The Large and more advanced developing countries to which of course Brazil is a part of are extremely imp. They are growing. That is important to keep in mind and their emissions are growing rapidly. Already, today developing countries are responsible collectively for a huge part of the total emissions. And in the future they will dominate the emissions. Therefore, their decisions regarding their development will decide the fate of the globe.”

Answering a question on what aspects of the Kyoto Protocol that the EU would like to discard, Ambassador Turesson said:

We have never said actually certain aspects. We have never said good parts or bad parts. We have talked about all its essentials- beginning with QELROs, beginning with commitment periods and everything that’s important to describe the commitments as such... We want to insert this architecture into one a single legal instrument. We have made a thorough analysis about this and have come to the conclusion that this in fact in itself of course is desirable and it may be the best way of preserving the Kyoto architecture in the future.”

Answering a question on which countries have come up with comparable efforts, Ambassador Turesson said:

“We are not ready to answer that question right now. We are in discussions.”

Ambassador Metzger added:

“We will have the full picture only in the last days on Copenhagen. Maybe even just the last night.”