

**Opening of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16)
Cancún, 29 November 2010**

**Address by Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Excelentísimo Sr. Felipe Calderón, Presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos,
Distinguida Señora Licenciada Margarita Zavala,
Su Excelencia, Patricia Espinosa, Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores de México,
Su Excelencia, Lykke Friis, Ministra de Cambio Climático y Energía del Reino de
Dinamarca,
Su Excelencia Juan Elvira, Secretario de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales de México,
Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, Presidente del Panel Intergubernamental sobre el Cambio Climático
(PICC) de las Naciones Unidas,
Dr. Mario Molina, Presidente del Centro Mario Molina para Estudios Estratégicos sobre
Energía y Medio Ambiente,
Sra. Simona Gómez, Representante de la Comunidad Indígena Tzetal,
Senora Gloria Guevara, Secretaria de Turismo,
Senor Félix González Canto, Gobernador del Estado de Quintana Roo ,
Organizaciones en calidad de observadores,
Membres de la Prensa:

En primer lugar quisiera expresar mi más profundo agradecimiento al Señor Presidente Calderón y a la Presidente entrante de la Conferencia de las Partes y todo su equipo por el tremendo esfuerzo realizado en la organización de esta conferencia en esta espectacular ciudad de Cancún. Además de los incansables y detallados preparativos para esta conferencia, le doy las gracias por sus infatigables esfuerzos para facilitar una mejor comprensión y un intercambio activo entre las Partes a lo largo de los últimos once meses. Su liderazgo abierto y transparente en este proceso ha sido realmente ejemplar.

Junto con los Presidentes de los Grupos de Trabajo, sé que México continuará desempeñando este papel de decidido liderazgo. Tenga seguridad que la Secretaría de la Convención les apoyará en todo, a la Presidencia y a todas las Partes.

I also would like to extend my sincere thanks to those countries which have made a generous contribution to enable the participation of two delegates from all developing countries and 2 +1 delegates from the least developed countries and small island developing States.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to COP16, welcome to CMP6!
Welcome to the land of the ancient Mayan goddess Ixchel!

Next to being the goddess of the moon, Ixchel was also the goddess of reason, creativity and weaving. May she inspire you - because today, you are gathered in Cancún to

weave together the elements of a solid response to climate change, using both reason and creativity as your tools.

Weaving this tapestry is urgent.

- It is urgent because according to the World Meteorological Organization, concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have today reached their highest level since pre-industrial times;
- It is urgent because the poorest and most vulnerable need predictable and sufficient assistance to face a serious problem that they did not cause;
- And it is urgent because the multilateral climate change process needs to remain the trusted channel for rising to the challenge;

The task is not easy, but it is achievable.

I know that, because in the past, you have woven tapestries that have turned into significant achievements in the context of the already existing implementation agenda of both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

I urge you to further advance those issues here in Cancún and to continue weaving them into ever more effective achievements.

But evidently, in order to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Convention, a richer tapestry of efforts is needed.

During 2010, you have taken important steps.

- You revealed a commitment to live up to the fast start finance pledged in Copenhagen. Developed countries have announced pledges totaling USD 28 billion dollars and many of them are now making information available on the disbursement of these funds. This is encouraging and I urge developed countries to complete the work on this pledge in a transparent and timely manner;
- You also revealed a growing convergence that a balanced set of decisions under both the COP and the CMP could be an achievable outcome here in Cancun;
- You revealed a willingness to capture progress and advance work with a text under the Kyoto Protocol;
- And you revealed that you may be able to agree on a decision to start operationalizing the Bali Action Plan.

However, before those issues can move forward there are a number of politically charged issues that have not yet benefited from equal willingness to compromise, both under the Kyoto Protocol track and the LCA track.

With respect to the Kyoto Protocol, these politically charged issues include:

- The need to avoid a gap after the first commitment period and the importance of having clarity on the continuation of the Kyoto Protocol;
- How the mitigation proposals put forward by industrialized countries in 2010 could help achieve clarity on this;

- And how to send a signal from Cancun that governments wish to continue engaging the private sector through the Kyoto Protocol's market mechanisms beyond 2012.

Under the LCA, the unresolved issues include:

- The formalization of mitigation proposals put forward by Parties in 2010 and the accompanying accountability for their implementation;
- The mobilization of long-term finance, the creation of a new fund and the accompanying accountability of its delivery;
- Response measures;
- And the understanding of fairness that will guide long-term mitigation efforts.

I urge you to resolve these issues with priority so that a balanced outcome in Cancun can be achieved. A tapestry with holes will not work and the holes can only be filled in through compromise.

Excellencies, when the stakes are high and the issues are challenging, compromise is an act of wisdom that can unite different positions in creative ways.

Looking at what you have achieved over the past months, I am convinced that you can compromise to find your way to a concrete outcome in Cancun.

That outcome needs to be both firm and dependable and have a dedicated follow-on process for future work.

Excellencies, the goddess Ixchel would probably tell you that a tapestry is the result of the skilful interlacing of many threads. I am convinced that 20 years from now we will admire the policy tapestry that you have woven together and think back fondly to Cancun and the inspiration of the goddess Ixchel.

Thank you.
