

**Ministerial Consultation on Climate Change and the Cancun Conferences  
New York, 25 September 2010**

**Welcoming remarks by Ambassador Patricia Espinosa  
Secretary of Foreign Relations of Mexico**

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you all for being here. As incoming President of this year's UN Conferences on Climate Change, I am encouraged by your presence and your personal engagement with this process.

As you all know, the issue at hand involves many technical details related to environmental protection. The main point that I will make today, however, is that dealing with climate change is in reality an intensely political matter that goes to the very heart of development strategies and to the way our economies are run. It is an issue that demands close guidance from the highest levels of government.

When we think of the human and economic impacts from weather events that we have witnessed in this year alone – from drought and fires in Russia to floods in South Asia – it is clear we cannot risk doing nothing. In Mexico we estimate that 15 per cent of our national territory, 68 per cent of our population and 71 per cent of our GDP is highly exposed to the impacts of climate change.

At the same time, it is also clear that there are great opportunities in clean technologies, practices and development projects. In Mexico, innovative schemes in the field of forestry are already being used as powerful tools for social development.

It is not an exaggeration to state that only if we act together will we continue to be able to provide our citizens with the stability they expect. It is also very much the case that these coming weeks will be critical to make the Cancun Conferences a success. We must focus on the task at hand with the necessary sense of urgency.

The incoming Mexican Presidency of the Conferences has conducted broad and open consultations with representatives from every region and every group. We have spared no effort to ensure an inclusive and transparent negotiating environment. We have worked within the formal process, while also promoting

informal dialogues to facilitate the reaching of compromises. We have carried out extensive outreach efforts with civil society, the private sector and other interested constituencies. You can be certain that we will continue to act along those lines throughout.

As a result of our collective endeavor, methodology has improved. The Chairs of both working groups have exercised remarkable leadership and we now have negotiating texts of the parties to work upon.

We are making progress, but time is running short. As you all know, there is only one six-day formal negotiating session left, to be held in Tianjin, China.

Based on my consultations, it is my firm belief that in Cancun we can adopt a broad and balanced package of decisions that leads to immediate action. No one single action or agreement can at once deal with every complex implication of climate change. It is an evolving issue that is highly dependent on the findings of science and, as I have said, inherently linked to the broader process of socio-economic development. Cancun can be, and I believe will be, the start of a new era of delivering global action to stop climate change, according to our common but differentiated responsibilities.

I have convened this meeting – and I thank you again for your presence – to collectively assess the status of the negotiations. From this, together, we can identify the fundamental issues that need to be part of the set of decisions to be adopted in Cancun. We must also renew our political commitment with this process.

Dear colleagues,

Allow me to address one additional initiative that aims at providing further guidance to the process. Denmark, Mexico and South Africa, as Presidents of COP 15, COP 16 and COP 17, have decided to act together as a troika. We believe this will lead to greater continuity of efforts, and hope that this practice might be sustained in the coming years. We will also soon submit for your consideration the possibility of having each Presidency formally lead from the beginning of the preparatory process, and not only from the first day of the COP itself, as is currently the case.

Thank you for your attention.