

Statement by the Republic of Gabon on behalf of the African Group at the Closing Plenary of the 52nd Session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI)

17 June 2021

Madam Executive Secretary and Presiding Officers of the Subsidiary Bodies

Distinguished Delegates,

The Republic of Gabon is speaking on behalf of the 54 African countries. The African Group associates itself with the statement made by the Republic of Guinea on behalf of the Group of G77 and China.

SB Chairs,

The African Group would like to thank you, Chairs, for your able leadership for this session. We would also like to thank the co-facilitators and the Secretariat for their support during this SBs session.

Chairs, and colleagues,

The African Group came prepared to engage with Parties to advance the delayed work due to the postponement of the SBs session and the COP itself. We also stressed the importance of completing the mandates of SB 52 and 53 before Glasgow.

While always calling for in-person climate change negotiations, African Group is demonstrating that this is feasible and possible, when we are organized and disciplined. In coordination with the Egyptian Government, that we commend and thank a lot, AGN succeeded to hold a three (03) weeks Africa Hub for almost fifty (50) participants in Sharm El Sheikh. Respecting strict COVID sanitary measures and regular PCR Tests for all participants. The African Group would like to send the message to all that the work under the UNFCCC process is possible, and that at least constituted bodies can be held in-person, while hoping that the world COVID situation will get better soon and ensure that COP26 and later on recover their participation normality.

We, however, emphasize the challenges of virtual negotiation, which were noticeable impacting our work and limited the contributions from Parties. It is important to address these challenges before Glasgow through exploring additional physical session to consider the mandates of SB 54 and 55 and address the delayed work.

Chairs,

First of all, I would like to recall that African Group is fully committed to contribute to the progress of our work and to make sure we succeed in Glasgow.

As stated in our opening and stocktaking statement, the African Group is reiterating the need to give more space in the agenda to items related to adaptation, technology development and transfer and loss and damage as it constitutes priorities for us.

In addition, as we are in a party driven process, we remain fully available to contribute in setting clear criteria to consider importance of issues for the African Group and other developing countries.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that these priorities of the African Group and developing countries are not left behind, and we are not starting from scratch at COP26. The Africa Group calls for any additional session and the SBs session in Glasgow to priorities the agenda items on adaptation, technology development and transfer and loss and damage.

Chairs,

The African Group would like to thank you and the co-facilitators for the informal notes that captured the progress at this session. Our understanding of these informal notes is that they are prepared under your authority and have no formal status. Thus, we would like to register our concern on some of the inconsistencies in capturing progress. There were some textual conclusion languages while the understanding was to capture general views of Parties to be considered at COP26. In light of this, we would like to put on record the virtual informal notes and views that need to be considered in a physical meeting.

On SBs Joint agenda items,

- On Koronivia Joint work on agriculture, Considering Africa climate vulnerabilities and circumstances, and the importance of agriculture as the overarching priority for the continent that must ensure food security, the African Group shared our views and recommendations. After six workshops under the KJWA, we noted that the support provided by financial entities to agriculture is far from the needs of African countries to increase adaptation actions and projects on the ground, ensure food security, and reach the expected co-benefits. We highlighted these, and we are concerned that these are not explicitly mentioned in the 3 informal texts prepared by co-facilitators of this informal virtual session. The African Group remains open to discussing new topics on dealing with mobilization, provision and accessibility of financial resources and support for agriculture programs and projects in line with NAP's adaptation strategies focusing on NDCs, particularly those conditional.

- On Finance related agenda items, we have noted some progress was made at this session. Thus, the lack of appetite to commit adequate support and report accordingly under SBI agenda item 4c, is concerning. We welcome the communications from developed countries Parties under Article 9.5 of the PA; however, the African Group calls for further clarify and competence of the indicative qualitative and quantitative information on climate finance. In addition, there were limited progress on transparency of support and support adaptation through article 6.2 under markets under SBSTA.
- The African Group would like to highlight that Finance is a corner stone for Africa participation in the global effort to tackle climate change, and lack of ambition within finance items would send a negative message that is not in line with the calls for enhancing climate action by all.
- On response measures, we are disappointed with the delays in implementation of the six years' work plan of the forum and its KCI and the continued resistance of some parties to implement mandated events to catch up with lost time. We strongly, urge the KCI to ensure the implementation of all mandated events of the work plan before COP 26 in order to address the impacts of implementation on response measures as per the six years' work plan. Further, we call for a strategy to be developed that will help the forum to catch up on the delay in implementation of its work plan, which takes advantage of preparation of input, including submissions in the period leading to COP 26.

On SBI agenda items,

- On agenda item 3, National Adaptation Plans, we had meaningful discussions where we raised challenges, gaps and needs that we continue to face in the process to formulate and implement the NAPs, particularly on the implementation aspects. We hope that the SBI Chair's informal note will capture all the views submitted from the Co-facilitators summaries.
- On agenda item 4 b, terms of reference for the CGE, we would like to emphasise the importance of the role of the CGE in preparing us to report under the Paris Agreement, and its ongoing role under the Convention. We are confident we will conclude this item swiftly in Glasgow. On agenda item 4 c, technical and financial support for reporting, it is of vital importance to our Group that we develop and decide on a roadmap for support for reporting under the Paris Agreement in Glasgow. We cannot imagine concluding the other transparency agenda items without this.
- On agenda item 5, Common timeframes, the African Group welcomes the informal note from the co-facilitators and expresses our appreciation for their work. However, we are

highly disappointed that no progress was achieved on this Agenda item during this session as Parties are still divided by their positions on common time frames. Our Group is committed to working to reaching a decision on common time frames in Glasgow. Still, we have observed concerns that the entrenched positions of parties on this Agenda item leave us with limited chances of achieving a decision on common time frames anytime soon. Further to this, the Group views political will as pertinent in concluding this agenda item.

- On agenda item 11, Matters relating to LDCs, we found the exchange of views on this matter progressive and constructive. We are confident that progress shall be made when we meet in person in Glasgow or before Glasgow.]
- On agenda item 13(b), on Technology Development and Transfer, Africa recognises the important role of each of the two processes under consideration for the continuous improvement of the performance of the technology mechanism and, subsequently, its services to developing countries. However, we are of the opinion that to correctly perceive the nature and extent of the required alignment of the two processes, each of the processes should be initially conducted independently; and thereafter be subsequently given stepwise consideration. In the meantime, we look forward to the commencement of the first periodic assessment. With regard to progress on technology agenda items, Africa continues to be concerned about the slow progress.

On SBSTA agenda items,

- On the Nairobi Work Programme, the informal work has given Parties the space to reflect on the progress made since SBSTA 50 and to put forward ideas and priorities to close the knowledge gaps and scale up adaptation action. However, more time is needed to consider information from the recently published progress report of 2021, including the proposed work plan and the modalities for the stocktake planned for SBSTA 56. We look forward to continuing this work in Glasgow.
- The African Group emphasises the need for strengthening the engagement of African parties, national focal points and experts in the different modalities of work of the NWP and the need to expand its thematic focus and knowledge products to address areas related to drought, water scarcity and land degradation, and to further expand its collaboration to cover all Africa's subregions including local centers on adaptation. The African Group noted with concern the co-facilitators approach to capture progress made in this informal session through decision text and requested the co-facilitators to revise the informal note and reformulate it to summarise all views expressed.
- On sources to the GST, The African Group welcomes the constructive discussions that

took place and reiterates the importance of ensuring that the GST is comprehensive, balanced and based on equity and science. We note from the examples of inputs and areas of focus that Parties proposed should complement the agreed list of sources, the non-exhaustive nature of those lists. The Group calls for the provision of support, as appropriate, to empower Non-Party stakeholders from developing countries to share their knowledge and experience in the GST.

- On matter relating to Article 6, We had constructive discussions on the outstanding issues under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement during SBSTA 52. We welcome the SBSTA chair plans to continue the mode of work in the incoming months through the organisation of dialogues at the HoDs and experts levels. Many options were proposed and captured in the summaries provided by the SBSTA chair on all of the crunch issues. It is important to ensure that all views expressed during the discussions are accurately reflected in the summaries. It is crucial to underline that the objective of the ministerial consultations should be to find informed solutions for issues where clear options have already been outlined and all implications of each option assessed.
- On agenda item 14, We are pleased to report that progress was made, and the mode of work, based on consideration of examples and informal notes, produced by and revised by the co-facilitators, was effective in advancing discussion, and capturing in some detail the views of Parties, on these important items. However, it also highlighted limitations of the virtual format, especially for detailed technical discussion, and creative solutions will have to be found to complete the necessary preparatory work before COP 26.

The African Group is also concerned that the difficulties which will be faced by developing countries in implementing new reporting tables, especially on GHG inventories, are not being adequately addressed, neither in this agenda item or in SBI 4 b and c. Without taking the concerns of developing countries seriously and addressing the need for capacity-building and support, the new transparency system will falter. We need a system which has as wide a participation as possible. We also have to stress once again the importance for African countries on robust reporting on support provided, and on adaptation and loss and damage."

On the consultation by the COP Presidencies,

- The African Group believes that the establishment of the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage was one of the major outcomes of COP25/CMA2 in Madrid. The Network should be fully operational to catalyse technical assistance that would increase action and support to developing countries directly and on ground to enable them implement approaches for addressing, averting and minimizing the loss and damage.
- We are of the view that Santiago Network should be under the UNFCCC and its structure should be carefully designed to enable it to conduct its dynamic functions and take into consideration its linkages with the Executive committee of the Warsaw

International Mechanism on loss and damage.

Chairs, and Parties,

African countries submitted ambitious climate actions under their NDCs and called for the implementation of climate actions in full conformity with the Convention and Paris Agreement, guided by the principle of equity and CBDR. The Africa Group calls on developed countries to raise their ambition and meet their pre-2020 mitigation and finance goals. Developed countries Parties must lead the way to the efforts against climate change by fulfilling their obligations as a show of good faith and building trust ahead of COP26.

We, the African Group, also like to request the Secretariat to ensure the communications and information on climate action should be in accordance with the Convention and that UNFCCC is the primary intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

Madam Secretary, Chairs, and Parties,

The African Group thanks you and look forward to working with you to advance our work before COP26.

I thank you