

Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC Meeting with Observers

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Notes are my best attempt to capture what was discussed.

- **ENGO chair**

- Express appreciation for Simon Stiell and congratulate him on his new position as executive secretary.
- Initial observations: This might not be an issue with all constituencies, but important to highlight the fact that this has not been an easy COP. Numerous problems with logistics, accommodations, lack of food, water, toilets, etc.
- This might appear to be minor, but it does affect the way we are able to participate in the process.
- We know the secretariat knows about many of these challenges, but this is an opportunity to engage on this and other topics.

- **Executive Secretary Simon Stiell**

- Look forward to this meeting. Wants to find other ways to engage as well, not just in these big groups with him sitting on the podium.
- Impressed with all the constituency groups. It is a very diverse group with different agendas and interests. The constituency groups care about the process and about your constituencies and you want to see change. You are willing to put yourselves on the line. You want your voices heard and want your ideas and the solutions that you bring to be felt.
- What he has said in every engagement is that he wants to work with us, wants to get to know us, wants to get to know the diversity that exists here.
- With the challenge of climate and the need for urgent and deliberate action, the urgency becomes more and more intense. Want to talk about how we can channel all of that and bring that into the process as much as possible so the inputs can add to the conversation and the resulting action. The UNFCCC's role is as the facilitator of the process, it is a party driven process. The UNFCCC can provide a platform for constituencies. My promise to you is that I am learning and have a lot to learn, but promise for inclusion and promise to get to know this group.
- Want to dive into listening to you and to hear what you think we can do more of to help you more. And, how you can help us more.
- I know this has not been an easy COP for you. We are talking to the presidency. Things are getting addressed, but not sure if it is enough, that remains to be seen. If we can help facilitate your engagement more in the week we have left, we will do so.
- I would like to share with you reflection on where we are at with the process in the negotiations.

- The SBs should close, will close on Saturday.
 - The technical part of the negotiations is concluding.
 - Rewinding to the beginning of COP, there was the agenda discussion of the additional agenda items, presidency discussions have taken place on those and those will be ongoing during week two.
 - The **loss and damage agenda item** being included is important and parties have been engaging.
 - Parties are willing to engage and engage constructively.
 - This is of significant importance to vulnerable countries who have been suffering impacts for generations.
 - The limits of adaptation have been identified.
 - The time for this discussion is now.
 - Not going to predict the final outcome, but from his observations, even with the nervousness and sensitivities that surround this subject, believe there is a path forward for an outcome, for an outcome that is time bound and reflects urgency.
 - On other items, **finance, mitigation, adaptation, transparency:**
 - There is a lot of text that has been put forward, a lot of sifting through that and the plan is that the SB bodies will close. Some items might run over into the second week. Ministers arrive over the weekend.
 - That political direction from the ministers will provide guidance on what are the critical outcomes.
 - Things started with the 110 heads of state at the leaders summit.
 - Not one of them contradicted the ambition needed.
 - A lot of work still ahead of us, up to those who are here to do their jobs.
- **ENGO chair**
 - Happy to hear you want to engage with us and work on improving the process.
- **IPO**
 - Congratulations on the new position.
 - They need support in some basic things. They want the executive secretary to keep working with them in the discussions about the human rights approach and especially the human right approach and Indigenous peoples' collective rights.
 - On direct access to funds, they would like to know how they can be more engaged in space.
 - There are logistical challenges with language barriers. With Indigenous peoples coming from all over the world, for people who do not speak English, there are lots of barriers.
- **Women and Gender**
 - Congratulations to the executive secretary on his new role.
 - **Logistics**
 - As constituencies, we have been doing a big job so that people here, the newcomers especially, understand the complexities of this space.

- Unfortunately what we have been encountering is not this level of effort from the hosts. Things are not inclusive and not safe for all.
- The executive secretary must do something about this, do something to stop these in time before they start a tradition or narrative of upcoming COPs. We are doing our best to keep constituencies engaged and feel this is a safe place and bring demands and priorities, but what they are observing is an increase in fear.
- With fear, you can't guarantee trustworthy relationships in the process.
- During the last COP in Glasgow, there were covid restrictions which limited participation in negotiations. But now the issue is logistics.
- Meeting rooms don't have many chairs for observers.
- Very concerned and hope this isn't an effort to limit participation of observers
- In one instance, Indigenous women from the constituency were speaking at an event and the room was needed so they were interrupted and told they could continue another time.
- **On the substance of the negotiations**, Parties are negotiating on weak text.
 - Starting to get lost on who this agenda aims to serve at this point.
 - These negotiations are not serving the purpose of advancing work on gender equity in climate action or advancing gender equity in the Paris Agreement.
- **Executive Secretary response to IPO and Women and Gender**
 - Yes the process is abstract, he is still learning too. How do we humanize what happens here is something that can be worked on- making it real for people. Commend the constituency groups for doing this work.
 - Need to bring as much clarity as possible to the process for people.
 - One thing he has observed is we often hit a brick wall when expectations are unrealistic based on what the process can allow and does not allow. This is often a challenge.
 - COP being safe and inclusive is a fundamental principle of UNFCCC and UN in general.
 - Secretariat is committed to ensuring the level of inclusivity that is required and that delegates can participate safely.
 - With what is happening outside of this COP - the geopolitics, the tensions that exist outside - what we have been asking is for a safe space for the real world to take place and that is a safe space even with all the complexities and tensions that exist outside of the venue.
 - The actions that are within our control we are taking to make sure this is a safe space for participation.
 - There are 9,000 observers at this COP. This is a reflection of the effort that is going on to ensure inclusion. When that number rises, that is a reflection of what you are asking for, that is a reflection of how boundaries are being moved. This is a positive signal.
 - On the gender agenda within the Paris Agreement:

- All elements are in the Paris Agreement for a reason.
 - The process has to make sure the words on the paper come to life.
 - There are other words in the Paris Agreement that are on life support or need life injected into them.
 - The executive secretary has a role to play from putting the words on paper to implementation of bringing those words alive.
- **Farmers**
 - Thank you for this time, and welcome executive secretary.
 - Closely following the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture, and it appears that work will continue into next week.
 - Last night seemed positive that a decision might be reached. What's your perspective on this?
 - **Executive Secretary response**
 - Will be briefed later today on the negotiations.
 - Just came from a session on agriculture.
 - Want to have a strong outcome on food security.
- **Executive Secretary**
 - As a blanket statement on the challenges of the COP- rooms, access, seating, or other elements that are impeding ability to do what you need to do.
 - These have been known about and as issues are arriving, they are being brought to the attention of the presidency and we are seeing improvements.
 - But this is a reactive intervention on our part.
 - With every presidency and COP moving forward, what we need to see is improvement on improvement on improvement.
 - Prep has already started for COP28, and we are trying to get ahead of this.
 - Engaging aggressively and proactively with the COP27 presidency. There are also some issues the secretariat has worked directly to address before they come to the fore.
- **LGMA**
 - We will have a mayor from the Caribbean coming next week.
 - Thank you for intervention at GST yesterday about the need for a political process to be kicked off.
 - Want to raise the fact that Paris was a new stage of the process. In Glasgow, the rules were agreed.
 - This new era also needs to be reflected in how observers engage. This has got to be multi-level and multi-stakeholder cooperation.
 - The current model we are using is a 1990s model, we are living in that era with observer engagement. Let's bring this Paris Agreement era of constituency engagement into the 21st century.
 - Have for a long while been asking for climate and urbanization to come together. This year for the first time there is a climate and urban ministerial. The more that the ministers of climate and urbanization talk to each other, the better. The climate community can benefit from this process.

- It is a long journey, and we want to walk with you.
- **Executive Secretary response**
 - His intervention on GST was very deliberate.
 - The GST is a flagship deliverable of the Paris Agreement, it is critical for COP28, and it has to send a strong message.
 - It is not just looking at the past, not just an inventory of what has been done.
 - The GST covers all the elements within the process and also covers the non-state actor piece.
 - It also highlights key success, and there are many.
 - The role of the secretariat is to ensure that the facilitation of the process is a highly proactive one.
 - Cities are a critical part of the solutions and the approach.
 - The Executive Secretary comes from a small country. There are cities in the world that can provide solutions that are on scale with multiple countries. The need for your call for ministers of finance and development to come together is a key call.
 - The secretariat has a view of the entire landscape and can see the strong interconnections and where there is weak connection. They can facilitate opportunities coming together.
 - The secretariat has been on a 30 year journey. Still have big mountain to climb, it has been phenomenal.
 - Take strength in the support and experience of the secretariat team to address the challenge.
 - Thank you for calling it out, the secretariat staff appreciate the appreciation.

- **TUNGO**

- Logistics- in terms of having room for their coordinating meetings, have not seen this before, the uncertainty about having a room or not.
- They are also noting lessons for COP28.
- Ahead of COP27, these points were raised about their room for the daily coordinating meetings.
- Anxious for next week for their coordinating room.
- There is also an issue of people entering rooms, taking pictures, filming what they are doing when they are supposed to be able to be closed and private meetings for members of the constituencies.
- For negotiations, representation of observers in meetings and how they are selected needs a shake up and needs to be dealt with.
 - There are just way too many people at COP. We want people to be here who will participate in an effective way, but we don't want an inflation of population at COPs.
- Conflict of interest issue [not wanting FF related people able to attend COPs]. Want the executive secretary to be aware of this effort.
- On their core business, they want climate policy to include workers.

- All parties are speaking on just transition.
 - Sometimes they forget what they put in the Paris Agreement.
 - Want to keep parties focused on the real meaning of what is in the Paris Agreement.
- **Executive Secretary response**
 - Workers are key to the transition. This is about people. The heart of that is our workers, and the role they have to play in this.
 - Want to make sure you are accommodated in the venue, as accommodated as possible.
 - Conflicts of interests- still trying to familiarize himself with this issue- he now knows it is something that needs to be resolved among observer groups. If the secretariat can help in facilitating these discussions to resolve this, let them know.
 - This is an inclusive process, important to bring all parties to the table.
- **YOUNGO**
 - Executive Secretary, thank you for your presence at the Conference of Youth. The youth day on Thursday was really important.
 - They have been working to really step up as youth in engaging with the negotiations. They put together comprehensive recommendations.
 - Want to mention that the COP presidency did not attend the Conference of Youth after a tradition of many years of attending - came to the pavilion for maybe five minutes with photographers. Want the presidency to be fully engaged with youth, would like help facilitating that.
 - On logistics, youth got offered subsidized accommodations and then showed up and there were all sorts of issues.
 - Accreditation is a challenge because many youth are not part of accredited organizations. The process to register organizations is not possible because they don't have the documentation required to apply.
 - But thank you for sincere and encouraging remarks at the Conference of Youth. And having the pavilion as a place to meet and work is great. Hope parties continue to support that at every COP.
 - **Executive Secretary response**
 - So impressed by the speaker and by the YOUNGO leaders.
 - Will continue to reiterate the importance of everyone in the room and especially the young generation.
 - The old hard backs (term from Caribbean about older turtles) need to make sure that youth have the platform and we have the responsibility to ensure you have even greater opportunities than the past generations.
 - You have my commitment. Looking forward to working with the youth.
- **BINGO**
 - Every COP is important for business, this COP is particularly important. There are tough decisions on several fronts, the global business community stands resolutely with the Paris Agreement.

- Invite view from the Executive Secretary on the direction of discussion on cover decision.
- Appreciate support you can lend to ambition.
- How can we reinforce collaboration and dialogue to fully implement the Paris Agreement?
- **Executive Secretary response**
 - Business is where we will see a reflection in the emissions numbers.
 - Your continued advocacy at this level in addition to the work within the business community - engaging with business and sectors and understanding their responsibility and the solutions they bring is key.
- **ENGO/DCJ**
 - Thanks to the whole secretariat team.
 - Want to recognize the secretariat team and the people in Egypt - the people doing the humble jobs should be really appreciated, this would not be possible without them. [lots of applause to support this].
 - On logistics and safety, hotel, harassment, and control are all issues.
 - COP should not be an opportunity to make money- especially not for those who are already rich.
 - Appreciate all the efforts of the secretariat to address issues.
 - The COP is not an EXPO, the EXPO portion does have value, but we need to focus on the negotiations.
 - We are here for the negotiations, not for the EXPO, and we need safe and accessible meeting space.
 - The quality of the participants is important- there is branding everywhere of polluters and fossil fuel lobbyists here.
 - During the observer review process, five constituency groups called for an accountability framework for people to disclose their interests; this was not implemented.
- **ENGO/CAN**
 - Want to see an Executive Secretary that will speak strongly on loss and damage and on climate impacts.
 - On logistics, some people have been asked to sign a paper saying they won't go to COP or else they will get charged more for their hotel. Heard of instances of people saying they won't go to COP in order to not pay higher price rates. This prevents people from participating.
 - The venue is difficult.
 - Often you can't understand what is said in negotiating rooms in a lot of cases, real issues with participation.
 - Support the point on conflict of interest made by ENGO/DCJ.
 - For the GST technical dialogues, there were fossil fuel lobbyists at the GST roundtables.
 - Inclusiveness from their point of view should be extended to people who come with interest in the 1.5 goal.

- Issue of safety and security- multiple people recorded their afternoon meeting, which does not have a room.
- They have members now guarding their doors as bouncers, for their morning meetings.
- **Executive Secretary response**
 - He will look at the accountability framework- don't know about it.
- **RINGO**
 - In response to the question, what can the secretariat do more to help RINGO so RINGO can help more, RINGO can help the process more through consistent and deeper inclusion in the negotiating sessions.
 - The virtual platform is not working well and should not be considered a substitute for being in the room. Don't think we should consider the platform a default.
 - In terms of 21st century engagement, want to hear about, given that we are in implementation, what is the opportunity you envision to transform the way observers are engaged?
 - RINGOs have been attending the GST technical dialogue this week and there have been opportunities where observers in breakout sessions are engaging directly with parties and that is one model to be thinking about in terms of broader vision post-Paris.
 - **Executive Secretary response**
 - Can commit to working with you and parties to set the bar as high as possible with presidencies for each of the COP in terms of how we do that participation.
 - Looking forward to soliciting your thoughts and your views and working together with you.
 - In terms of the platform, that was useful during the pandemic, it is no substitute for the in person piece, but what it can do, technically it needs to be fit for purpose, but it should be able to include those not able to travel.
- **Logistics information from Laura at the secretariat**
 - Rooms- we hear you, all suffering on this.
 - Team has really struggled and tried to get them ready for everyone.
 - There have been some improvements, and they will try to make more rooms more available for all of you by next week.
 - Security chief recommends that the capacity of the room is the people sitting in chairs.
 - In the cases of harassment and intruders- want to follow up afterwards to get more specific information on this.
 - Will speak to security about that- we want to make sure those who are supposed to be in the room are the ones in the room.
 - The secretariat works closely with the tech staff. They will reiterate to make sure they know they are confidential meetings.

- On the bookings, the secretariat team had 1,700 meetings booked so far for COP27, 230 meetings have gone to observers, trying to make sure you have access to the rooms.
- We have hit the overall numbers of participants in Glasgow already, the venue is slightly bigger, but we have a lot more people.
- The urgency of having a 'future of COPs' discussion is really urgent.
- Their team has taken the hit.
- This is not sustainable.
- The youth hotels - many booked through the Ministry of Youth- have told hotels to not have extra fees and are looking to give youth specific paperwork from the Egypt government to help with this.