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“We are moving in the right direction but at a wrong speed” – says President Lula

Belém, 11 Nov (Radhika Chatterjee/Hilary Kung)- The COP 30 opening plenary began with an inspiring address by Brazil's President **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva**, where he said that under the Paris Agreement, “we are moving in the right direction but at a wrong speed”. [See further highlights of his speech below]. The opening also saw enchanting performances by the country's indigenous peoples.

Following Lula's address, work of the governing bodies was launched, after a smooth and swift adoption of their respective agendas. Ambassador **André Aranha Corrêa do Lago**, the Vice Minister for Climate, Energy and Environment at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil was elected the COP30 President at the opening plenary session.

The quick adoption of the agendas of UNFCCC's COP 30, the Paris Agreement's 7th session [CMA 7] and the Kyoto Protocol's 20th session [CMP] on Nov. 10 was enabled by intensive informal consultations held by the COP30 Presidency with Parties especially on Nov 9, where meetings went on very late into the night to find a way forward on 8 proposals for new agenda items from various Parties which were highly contentious. [See further details below].

HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESIDENT LULA'S ADDRESS

President Lula da Silva began by stressing the importance of choosing Belém as a site for COP30. He said “it would have been much easier to have the COP in a city” that was already well built as that “would have no problem.... but we decided to have the COP in the Amazon region state to prove that when you have political will” and “commitment to truth you can prove that nothing is impossible.” This he said is a “lesson of civility” and “human greatness”. Lamenting on the huge amount of resources going towards military spending, he said “it would be much cheaper to put money into climate finance than for war”.

Recalling the Rio Summit held in 1992 on ‘Environment and development’, he said that was a time when multilateralism was at its apex. It was during that time that countries “came up with the context of sustainable development and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.” Adding further, he said “today the Climate Convention is back to its home country” and stressed the need for reclaiming the enthusiasm that drove the birth of the Climate Convention.

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Third World Network is an independent non-profit international research and advocacy organization involved in bringing about a greater articulation of the needs, aspirations and rights of the peoples in the South and in promoting just, equitable and ecological development.

Address 131, Jalan Macalister, 10400, Penang, MALAYSIA.

Tel 60-4-2266728/2266159 Fax 60-4-2264505

E-mail twon@twonetwork.org Website <https://twon.my/>

Highlighting the urgent need for action, he said “climate change is not a threat of the future. It is a tragedy of the present time” in which extreme weather events cause devastation for the most vulnerable population.

Calling COP30 the “COP of truth”, and in an apparent reference to Trump administration in the United States, he added that “in an era of fake news and misinformation the obscurantists reject not only the evidence by science but also the progress in multilateralism. They control algorithms, sell hatred and spread fear. They attack institutions, they attack science and universities.”

Lula stressed that “now is the moment to defeat the denialists,” adding further that “without the Paris Agreement the world would suffer from catastrophic warming” and that “we are moving in the right direction, but at a wrong speed”.

He gave a call to action that was “split in three parts”. In the first part, Lula appealed to countries to abide by their commitments, including by formulating and implementing ambitious nationally determined contributions [NDCs]. He asked for the assurance of finance, technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries and the need for giving due attention to adaptation in developing countries.

In the second part of this call for action, he focused on accelerating climate action. He said “there is a need for overcoming reliance on fossil fuels and stopping deforestation” and stressed the need for advancing “a more robust governance to ensure that words can be translated into deeds.” Finally, he called on the international community “to place people at the core of the climate agenda.”

He said that “global warming has pushed millions of people into poverty” and it has a disproportionate impact on people who are least responsible for causing climate change. This he said “should be taken into account in adaptation action.” He said there should be a “fair transition” and pointed to the need for reducing “asymmetries between the Global North and Global South”, adding further that the “climate emergency is increasing inequality” and emphasised that this is “unacceptable.”

AT THE COP 30 PLENARY

At the COP 30 plenary, Ambassador do Lago announced that the agendas of the governing bodies would be adopted without the new agenda proposals, on the understanding reached among Parties that 4 out of the 8 proposals would involve further informal consultations convened by the Presidency and which will be open to observers.

The 4 agenda items under consideration are: Implementation of Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement [PA] [which relates to the mandatory provision of finance from developed to developing countries], unilateral trade measures (UTMs) [both of which were proposed by the **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)**]; ‘Responding to the synthesis report on nationally determined contributions [NDCs’ synthesis report] and addressing the 1.5 °C ambition and implementation gap’ by the **Alliance of Small Island States [AOSIS]** and ‘Reporting and review pursuant to Article 13 of the Paris Agreement’ proposed by the **European Union [EU]** [which relates to the biennial transparency reports (BTRs)].

[All of these agenda items were proposed for the consideration of the CMA, while the UTMs proposal is also for the consideration of the COP. The Article 9.1 finance agenda item has drawn the support of the **G77 and China.**]

Following the launch of work of the respective governing bodies, the Presidency convened consultations on these 4 agenda items that began late afternoon on Monday, and went on for around 4 hours, without consensus in sight. The next consultation will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 11, to find further solutions and the Presidency also announced that it will convene a stocktaking plenary to update Parties on these consultations on Nov.12.

WAY FORWARD ON THE OTHER AGENDA ITEM PROPOSALS

The COP 30 Presidency also informed that the agenda item related to the ‘Implementation the outcomes of the first global stocktake’ was withdrawn by its proponents. Ambassador do Lago also informed that the Presidency will conduct consultations on the item on the ‘Special needs and special circumstances of Africa’ [proposed by the **African Group**] and on the item on ‘Annual expert dialogue on mountains and climate change’

[proposed by Kyrgyzstan]. The Presidency also said that the outcomes of these consultations will be reflected in the report of the session. Parties were also informed that the item related to 'climate change and health' proposed by Zimbabwe would be dealt with under matters relating to adaptation.

Following the adoption of the agendas of the respective bodies, work was launched for the talks to proceed, which will begin Nov. 11.

WORK BEGINS UNDER THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES

The 63rd sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) viz. Scientific Body for Implementation (SBI 63) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 63) commenced at around 5.45 pm on Monday, following a delayed start.

The provisional agendas of the bodies were adopted smoothly, with the inclusion of a footnote regarding the understandings reached by Parties on the proposals by the LMDC on 'Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement' and 'UTMs'.

The SBI Chair **Julia Gardiner [Australia]** and SBSTA Chair **Adonia Ayebare [Uganda]** orally amended the provisional agendas to include the footnote, which was similar to the footnote and understanding agreed to during the SB 62 session in June.

The footnote read out was as follows: *"The SBI and SBSTA Chairs will hold substantive consultations on Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement to consider substantive elements regarding the implementation of Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement. The SBI and SBSTA chairs will take stock of progress on these consultations at SB63 and report back on the outcomes of these consultations at the conclusion of SB63, for Parties' consideration with a view to determining a way forward, including potentially a standalone agenda item on this matter. The issue of unilateral trade measures will be dealt with in the relevant agenda items, including under the Just Transition Work Programme, response measures, and other appropriate agenda items, consistent with the understanding on the way forward on this issue."*

Following the launch of work under the various agenda items of the respective bodies, towards the

end of the session, the SB Chairs provided a report back on the outcome of their consultations with Parties on the matter of Article 9.1, [which revealed that no consensus had been reached among Parties on the proposal]. The SB Chairs said that with the consultations and report back, their mandate had concluded.

China and **Saudi Arabia** took the floor, and requested the SB Chairs to provide a report back on the matter at another time and to communicate this in advance, as their finance negotiators were engaged in consultations convened the COP Presidency [on the agenda items as reported above, including on Article 9.1].

The Chairs then agreed that this matter remained open and that they would provide a subsequent report back with prior notification to ensure the relevant negotiators are present.

On another agenda item on 'Methodological issues: emissions from fuel used for international aviation and maritime transport' under the SBSTA agenda, the Chair had proposed that the consideration of this matter be deferred to June next year.

China took the floor and stressed that the matter was important for consideration at this session, as over the past year, the two international organizations responsible for the aviation and maritime sectors had undertaken extensive discussions on these issues and therefore, it is necessary within the framework of the UNFCCC to also consider these issues. The SBSTA Chair then proposed that informal consultations on this matter will proceed at this session.

Another intervention from the floor during the plenary, concerned the item on the Report of the Adaptation Committee. Speaking on behalf of the **Group SUR, Uruguay** supported by **Colombia, Argentina**, and the **EU** took the floor, requesting that the Chairs invite Parties to welcome the report rather than merely taking note of it.

In her opening remarks, SBI Chair **Julia Gardiner** paid tribute to the crucial role of indigenous peoples as stewards of the land and acknowledged their traditional knowledge and contributions to climate action, noting that the SB session is being held in the Amazon, which is home to many

Indigenous communities.