

Nkoana-Mashabane hails landmark talks

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COP17 president Maite Nkoana-Mashabane has congratulated all the delegations at the United Nations climate talks for "their leadership and rising to the occasion when it was most required".



(Image: GCIS)

The all-important talks ended in the early hours of Sunday morning after discussions continued throughout Saturday 10 December 2011, a day after COP17 was scheduled to end.

A second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol was agreed on and the package of decisions known as the Durban Platform represents a significant agreement that defines how the international community will address climate change in the coming years.

"You were prepared to show the required political will to move this process forward. It is without any doubt in my mind that we have worked together to save tomorrow, today," said Nkoana-Mashabane.

A problem common to all

"Climate Change is our common problem which affects us all and the Durban Platform is the story we will take home with us.

"Our intention with the Indaba was to restore trust in the multilateral system and to enshrine transparency and inclusivity within our party-driven process. The decisions that we have taken here are truly historical and include the following - The amendment of the Kyoto Protocol; decisions of the LCA; The Green Climate Fund; and The future of the Climate Change Regime," said Nkoana-Mashabane.

The South African minister once again expressed congratulations to Qatar as incoming COP18/CMP8 President for being prepared to host the next conference.

"We cannot omit South Korea's gracious gesture to compromise by offering to host the informal ministerial meetings in preparation for COP18/CMP8".

Nkoana-Mashabane - who worked very close to UNFCCC executive secretary Christiana Figueres and her team - thanked the global body for "their professional and much appreciated support".

Nkoana-Mashabane on several occasions referred to Figueres as her "sister".

"We are looking forward to continue working together in the further discharge of our duties as COP17/CMP7 President. Thank you to the City of Durban, the ICC and all those hard working support staff who spent marathon hours to contribute to the success of this event," said Nkoana-Mashabane.

The United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon in a statement welcomed the landmark decisions that came out of Durban.

"The decision to launch a protocol or legal instrument applicable to all parties under the UNFCCC is essential for stimulating greater action and for raising the level of ambition and the mobilisation of resources to respond to the challenges of climate change," said Ki-Moon.

The secretary-general is pleased decisions that will "operationalise" the Cancun Agreements, including a Technology Mechanism and an Adaptation Committee that will coordinate adaptation activities on a global scale, have been reached.

He called on the parties to quickly implement these decisions and to "continue working together in the constructive spirit evident in Durban".

Meanwhile, the Durban ICC, host to the talks have started to dismantle temporary structures. From Saturday morning the exhibition and expo centres were cleared up as the city started to bid farewell to delegates, NGOs and media.

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