

## **Transcript of CHOGM climate change press conference on 28 November 2009**

**Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Patrick Manning; Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamallesh Sharma; Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd; Prime Minister of Denmark, Lars Løkke Rasmussen; and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.**

### **Prime Minister Manning:**

Thank you very Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentleman the 20<sup>TH</sup> Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting here in Port of Spain was always recognized as a potential opportunity to add value to the negotiation process that was on the way. Moving towards a very comprehensive and legally binding agreement in Copenhagen next month in respect of the climate change issue that has consumed so much time around the world and for good reason. Indeed the very distinguished Secretary General of the United Nations and the Prime Minister of Denmark as the Chairman of the meeting to take place in Copenhagen next month, have been extremely concerned about the rate at which things have been moving and questions began to arise as to whether indeed the objectives that we set for ourselves as a world, could indeed be achieved in Copenhagen. As a result of that concern they had put together additional arrangements outside of the existing UN mechanism and had sort to make contact with whatever bodies that they felt would have made a positive contribution to a successful outcome in Copenhagen next month. It was in that context that we thought that we should invite to Trinidad and Tobago, to participate in a special session on discussions on climate change, the very distinguished Secretary General of the U.N Ban Ki-moon and Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark who is Chairman of the meeting in Copenhagen next month, and the President of France who has been very passionate in his articulation of a point of view that was designed to bring our discussions to a successful conclusion. As you know, we met yesterday and we had very extensive discussions on this matter. Our three guests did in fact make presentations, and that I am very pleased to say that the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting here in Port of Spain and after deliberating with our invited colleagues, have come to a conclusion on this matter. We've always known that the diversity of the Commonwealth provided us with a particular opportunity in this regard, comprising as it does some of the smallest and more vulnerable states in the world in relation to climate change, and some of the developed and richer countries of the world who might be in a much better position than other to contribute to a successful resolution of the issue. We have come to a conclusion, which we proudly would like to present to you as the Port of Spain Climate Change Consensus: The Commonwealth Climate Change Declaration. After discussions, there was a contact group that met, it was headed by the very distinguished Prime Minister of Australia, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, and it is on his good graces that we will now rely for some details on the Agreement, Prime Minister Rudd.

### **Australia Prime Minister Kevin Rudd:**

Thank you very much Prime Minister Manning, and could I commend your leadership in bringing about a substantive document which you ladies and gentlemen of the press will have before you soon. This Port of Spain climate change consensus, is a significant and substantive document aimed to provide consensus momentum and support for a substantive outcome in Copenhagen. What the Commonwealth has done today is throw its full weight behind the process now chaired by the Prime Minister of Denmark, Prime Minister Rasmussen. As Prime Minister Manning had said before, the officials that would process has in recent months reach

something of an impasse. Therefore, Prime Minister Rasmussen, supported by friends of the chair, has sort, with the corporation of the U.N Secretary General to drive a Leaders level process to bring about a substantial agreement in Copenhagen. What the Commonwealth of nations has done today is throw its full weight behind Prime Minister Rasmussen's efforts. The Commonwealth, as Prime Minister Manning has just indicated represents one third of human-kind, it represents some of the largest countries in the world and some of the smallest, some of the richest, some of the poorest and something approaching almost one third of the total number of States who represent the participating states in the conference of the parties. The second point I draw to your attention, is this, and that is the Commonwealth's conclusions about the importance of climate change finance in delivering a substantive outcome at Copenhagen. In paragraph 13 of the document which will be circulated, we deal specifically with the need for a Copenhagen Launch Fund starting in 2010, this fund builds substantially on a proposal which was bounced by the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, and has been embraced by Commonwealth nations today. Specifically, it seeks to provide immediate financial support to the small island states, the most vulnerable states around the world today, as they deal with the immediate challenges of adaptation and mitigation in the face of climate change. This morning, the Secretary General, the Prime Minister of Denmark and myself met with AOSIS member states in Trinidad today. It was an important meeting as we sort to come to terms with the real challenges facing these most vulnerable states in the face of climate change. The last point I would make is this. What we are seeking to do at Copenhagen, is to bring about comprehensive, substantial, operationally binding agreement. As the Prime Minister of Denmark has repeatedly said, 'One agreement in two steps'. The first step is the one which we have just described, and one which then leads to a full, legally binding document during the course of 2010. Could I conclude by commending the strong support that the U.N Secretary General has provided to this process, again by his presence here today at this meeting of the Commonwealth of Nations. Thank Prime Minister Rasmussen, for travelling from Copenhagen to be with us here, and of course your chairmanship Prime Minister Manning, in bringing about this most important, "Port of Spain Climate Change Consensus: The Commonwealth Climate Change Declaration of 2009".

### **UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon**

Thank you ladies and gentlemen. I highly commend the leadership of Prime Minister Manning and I am together with Prime Minister Rasmussen, grateful of a unique opportunity of engaging with all distinguished Heads of State and Government of Commonwealth States. I am very encouraged by their shared desire to achieve a successful outcome next month in Copenhagen. I strongly welcome the statement by the Leaders which was just introduced by the Prime Minister Manning just now, and who have committed themselves to this crucial global effort for consensus and results in Copenhagen. My message to all the Leaders is quite simple. Stay focused, stay committed, and come to Copenhagen and seal a deal in Copenhagen. We will be able to seal a deal. A deal that is ambitious, comprehensive and binding. And a seal that will satisfy the demands of the science. It will have an immediate operational effect together with short-term fast track financial support to boost vulnerable countries. My meetings with the Leaders of AOSIS and least developed countries have again made me firmly convinced that we must give priority to the plights and challenges of those most vulnerable countries in their efforts to mitigate and adapt themselves to this negative, very serious negative impact coming from climate change. The momentum for success in Copenhagen, has been growing , its growing. I

am very much committed that most of the Leaders are committed to participate themselves, in Copenhagen. We need the political leadership at this time. We have technology, we have our financing. We know what science is telling us. We are united in purpose. We are not yet united in action. Now this is time for world leaders show and committed and united in action. In that regard, I highly commend the leaders of Prime Minister Rasmussen, and we must seal the deal in Copenhagen. And we must help and support Prime Minister's efforts to seal a deal in Copenhagen. We need the leadership and commitment of all the leaders, and as Secretary General of the U.N I will continue to devote all my energy and time under my authority, to make this seal the deal in Copenhagen which has very serious implications for the future of our humanity and for future of our planet. Thank you very much.

### **Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma**

From the Commonwealth, has been deep pioneering organization which pointed out what real and present danger climate change is. The Langkawi Declaration is the first international declaration on the subject came many years before Rio and left a huge imprint upon Rio itself. If you want to know what the word existential means then picture the water lapping on your ankles in the coastal houses of Kiribati in the Pacific, or read President (Mohamed) Nasheed's plans for the evacuation of the Maldives of migration from you ancient habitats. The reason why the Commonwealth has been so passionate on this subject is because it is a membership of the small and the vulnerable as well as the large and the influential countries of the world. The commonwealth's strength is the equality of voice that it gives to everybody and the equality of concern for everybody's faith. Everyone has an equal right to be in the sun and to a place in the sun. And our respect for the small and the vulnerable and what needs to be done has been demonstrated in many areas in the past and in the economic areas, in trade and now in the field of environmental catastrophes. I feel that the good offices of the Sec. Gen. which the Sec. Gen. has exercised for so long, can now be converted into Secretary General's good offices for the planet itself. We believe that what has happened just now and on which so many distinguished spokesmen have added their voice, should be supplemented now and this we will discuss tomorrow in the Commonwealth, the Leaders and the Heads will discuss tomorrow. That while we are a visionary organization that see a long way, we're also an organization with practical tool-kits in our hands. And what is the support system of practical assistance, capacity building in its highest sense that we can bring along with it something, we have to watch this, because we have done it already when we adopted the late Victoria Climate Plan in the last CHOGM and going to build on it now, so that all of these countries who are in such dire plights now that they have a strategic friend and partner who will walk the walk with them towards whatever is required to adaptation, to mitigation, how you can access finance, how you can access the technology ; that there is somebody with them in this search. This is the strength of the Commonwealth, both to be able to give a vision and then to pursue it in significantly practical terms as well. Thank you very much.

### **Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen**

Thank you so much. First of all I will like to express my gratitude to Prime Minister Manning for organizing this very important meeting, and for inviting me and the UN Secretary General. We appreciate this opportunity for discussing these crucial issues with so many distinguished leaders. I will also like to use this opportunity to thank my very good friend, Kevin Rudd, who have facilitated the negotiation among the Commonwealth Leaders and who have supported our

Presidency for very long period of time. It is important to have friends of the Chair in order to reach an agreement in Copenhagen. I must say that I am very impressed by the statement made by the Commonwealth Leaders today. I will especially draw your attention to paragraph 7 and 13. I am encouraged that Leaders pledge to support the concept for the Copenhagen agreement that we have put forth. This (by) in from a sample leaders for more than 50 countries shows the recommitment towards reaching a substantial outcome in Copenhagen. And the proposal for Copenhagen Launch Fund is very, very concrete and delivers on the very important issue of fast start funding. So I must conclude by saying that I am very encouraged and I will leave Trinidad fully convinced that it will be possible to reach an ambitious agreement in Copenhagen in just a few weeks.

**Moderator – Conference Spokesperson: Eduardo del Buoy**

Thank you much, Prime Minister. Ladies and gentlemen we have time for a few questions if you identify yourselves by name and affiliation before you ask your question and wait for the mic to be given to you.

**Q and A Segment**

**Ann Davies – Morning Herald :**

My question for Mr. Rasmussen and Mr. Rudd. Does the agreement progress any consensus on targets and binding commitments by the Commonwealth countries?

**Prime Minister Kevin Rudd:**

The function of this meeting here at the Commonwealth has been two-fold on climate change. One is to debate among ourselves the support which should be extended to the Leaders level process given by the Prime Minister of Denmark, and it has done that, and that is covered off explicitly in paragraph 7. The second objective we have had here is to deal with the complex challenge of climate change finance. Climate change finance has been part and parcel of the negotiations across States who will participate in the Copenhagen conference for some time now. The breakthrough which is reflected here is the resolution of the part of more than 50 member states of the importance of a fast-start fund that which is described here in the communiqué as a Copenhagen Launch Fund of the order of magnitude which is described in the communiqué, and with a specific element of it, 10 percent, being recommended for the most vulnerable states; the small island states. On the specific question of targets and commitments, consistent with common but different shared responsibilities reflected in the Bali road map, that is still to be progressed through the negotiations between now and the Copenhagen conference itself. Those negotiations continue. Progress is being made. You see, as each day passes a large number of coming forward with own national commitments. Progress therefore, is being advanced on a daily basis. And to conclude on that, and again to support Prime Minister Rasmussen's process we now have more that 86 heads of Government around the world who have indicated that they will be attending the Copenhagen conference.

**Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen**

Actually right now it's 89, the number is increasing hour by hour and that shows strong commitment among world leaders. Well we haven't obviously finished the negotiations yet there are still some hard work to be done from now towards Copenhagen. But I would like to

draw your attention to the fact that the Commonwealth Leaders stated that we, that they, I mean I haven't participated in the negotiations, I am not a part of this statement but I am very encouraged by it. But the Common leaders have recognized the need for an early peaking year for global emissions and as Kevin Rudd's just said, 'common but different responsibilities', which means that the developed countries have to move fast, but there will also be a responsibility for the developing countries as well.

### **Joel Brown – Trinidad Express Newspaper**

The question is posed to the three Prime Ministers at the head table. The issue of climate change in particular. There are a lot of people here in Trinidad for example who question how genuine this commitment of political leaders concerning the matter when you have issues of development on the one hand and trying to deal with climate change on the other. We have aluminum smelter under construction here, we have oil and gas industries similar to those in other parts of the Commonwealth. So the question is, in light of the Port of Spain Declaration, how genuine is that commitment given also the plans for development such as things like smelters and furthering energy sector development.

### **Prime Minister Manning**

You know, I've always made it clear in Trinidad and Tobago that Government subscribes to the concept of sustainable development. There are the extremists who take the view that there are certain types of industries that should not be in the industrial mix at all in your country. Aluminum smelter is the one to which reference was made by the very distinguished journalist. We've had a number of consultations here on the aspects of aluminum smelting. One thing has emerged very clearly is that it is possible and in fact it is being done right now where aluminum smelters are operating and operating in a manner that poses no threat to the health and well being of animal, plant or human life in the countries in which they operate. There are some people just not prepared to accept that, but that's not the fact of the matter not only that, but in Trinidad and Tobago, we have place emission standards on the smelter that are higher than the standards to which the rest of the world has become accustomed. So that we are on the right side of the law as it were in this particular issue. And if Almighty God in His wisdom has endowed us with resources of oil and gas it will be a tremendous development for us to take the view that we will not seek to develop those sources of oil and gas. Rather, the position adopted by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, is that we will develop and utilize these resources in a manner that minimizes and hopefully eliminates any threat that they can have to the well being of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and rest of mankind.

### **Prime Minister Kevin Rudd**

Very, very quickly. What we're all about here as a global community is global action which is setting targets for reducing green house gas emissions for developed countries and commitment to action on the part of emerging economies. Secondly, that is driven by the science and what the IPCC has said to us and that is, 450 parts per million maximum temperature increase of 2 degrees Celsius and therefore, targets and commitments which flow from that globally to give the science effect through the national and global policy actions we then take. Thirdly, what is recommended across the community of nations is that we develop a linked set of cap and trade systems across the major economies of the world. The reason for doing that is to set a carbon price. If you set a carbon price across the world and through national actions, then what happens

is it shapes investment decisions for the future. It will shape decisions about what energy you should use in particular concentrations, in particular industrial processes. What renewable energies you should use. What price should therefore be placed on traditional sources of energy such as coal, and of course oil and natural gas as well. It is setting a new price discipline in the global economy, and that is where the Europeans have gone; that is where the Americans are proposing to go. Australia currently has its own carbon pollution reduction scheme and emissions trading scheme before our Senate, which we have an ambition and expectation will pass our Parliament in the week ahead. But this is the mechanism which sets a carbon price and then informs what decisions are taken within individual industrial projects anywhere in the world. Until you have a carbon price, that becomes very, very hard. With a carbon price it becomes quite possible.

**Roger Dwarika – CNMG/C News - Trinidad**

Question to the Secretary General and the Prime Minister's at the table. You talk about the financing, the 10 billion dollar financing, what controls if any have you worked out shall we say to ensure that financing goes out to the correct places and be used correctly. And to that end, what commitment have we gotten from the leaders of the smaller countries to ensure that finance will be used correctly?

**UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon**

There are many important pillars in making our Copenhagen deal a success. Among four major elements the key will be financing. Now I am encouraged by the converging opinions among the leaders that we must have at least 10 billion dollars per annum until 2012, before this legally binding treaty will become effective. By then longer term, but bigger package for financial and technology will be operational, and therefore this is very important and I am glad that this will be operational as soon as there is an agreement. European Union and many other countries have already expressed their support for this and I am sure that there will be a money flow from public funding as well as also some private funding for detailed way or formula. Where this money and how this will be generated will have to be discussed in the coming few more weeks mostly in Copenhagen. The Leaders will have to agree on all this modalities.

**Brad Norrington – Washington Correspondent for the Australia newspaper**

My question is directed to Mr. Sharma and to Mr. Rudd. You mentioned that one of the advantages of Commonwealth is of course that it brings together nations large and small. Can you say, (does) where does Canada stand as one of the larger nations? Is it part of this consensus agreement, and can you explain where Canada may have fitted in with your discussions?

**Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma**

The Commonwealth above all, looks at the question of equity. The injustice of having the smallest countries in the world, who have negligible carbon footprint on the map of the world but going under the first, under the hobnail boots of climate change is what the Commonwealth is the most concerned about. So the concern of Canada as of any other country is the same. What is it that we as an institution that is inclusive and equity-minded, what is our role in it? The answer to your question is yes. Canada has always been supportive in a variety of ways. I had the pleasure of this morning, acknowledging the role Canada has played in our observer missions politically, and I welcome the news which I heard that more support would be forthcoming

financially the next three years for this purpose. It's always been participating in it, and yes Canada is part of this agreement.

**Prime Minister Kevin Rudd**

To answer the question in relation to Canada. The commonwealth in these gatherings speaks with a single voice and we have spent a lot of time deliberating on the climate change challenge which is before us, and the communiqué you have before us fully incorporates the views of Canada and all states. I spoke with Prime Minister Harper this morning, he was fully supportive of what we have before us and I believe that reflects a strong predisposition on the part of all countries to get action at Copenhagen. The second point I would make also is, (let me make a further reference to Canada's contribution to adaptation funding on climate change for developing countries). Canada already provides significant funding to developing countries both in the Caribbean and elsewhere to assist with the adaptation task on climate change. Therefore, when it comes specifically to this new commitment to the Copenhagen Launch Fund, Canada has indicated to me it is fully supportive of this sort of approach. It is consistent with what Canada is already doing. Again the importance of what we have achieved today as a Commonwealth of developed and developing countries large and small is to speak with a single voice. And that single voice is saying to the world that we, as the Commonwealth representing one third of the world's population, believe the time for action on climate change has come. The clock is ticking to Copenhagen, we've achieved one third a significant step forward with this communiqué, and we believe that the political good will and resolve exists to secure a comprehensive agreement at Copenhagen. A new Copenhagen agreement.

**Prime Minister Manning**

Yes, just a quick word to Prime Minister Rasmussen whom I'd like to congratulate on the now likely successful outcome of the meeting in Copenhagen, that you can now add one more country to your list it's now ninety, Trinidad and Tobago will attend.