

Climate Change: Malaysia Supports Strong Political Message From CHOGM Leaders
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 27 (Bernama) -- Malaysia fully supports the initiative by the Commonwealth leaders to deliver a strong political message to the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-21) to the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman in a statement issued by Wisma Putra Friday, said that while Malaysia welcomed the initiative, the Leaders' Statement should, in no way, be prescriptive and prejudge the crucial elements that were currently being negotiated.

"These include the centrality of the UNFCCC, its principles and provisions, the importance of equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR)...

"... and the commitments of developed states parties to provide the means of implementation including finance, to transfer technology and to support capacity building in developing countries," he said, adding that any statement from the Commonwealth leaders should be supportive of and complement the ongoing UNFCCC process.

Anifah delivered the intervention relating to the issue of climate change while attending Session 2 of the Pre-Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (Pre-CHOGM) Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting, in Malta.

The UNFCCC, meant to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, is expected to finalise a new agreement on climate change, to be adopted this year and implemented in 2020.

While delivering the intervention, Anifah noted that the issue of climate change was seen as a complex, cross-cutting issue which would affect everyone, particularly the small island developing states (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs) due to their vulnerability.

"The LDCs and SIDS are highly vulnerable to extreme weather events and these are anticipated to increase in frequency and intensity due to climate change.

"This growing threat has adversely impacted our economic, social and environmental wellbeing," he added.

Touching more on the new agreement, Anifah said Malaysia hoped that it would include ambitious national plans from 2020 onwards, and it should also be a balanced agreement where both adaptation and mitigation were prioritised.

He said the agreement must reflect the priority of financing adaptation, for instance, through technology development as well as capacity building.

Anifah said Malaysia would like to reiterate that important blocks under the UNFCCC, namely adaptation, mitigation, finance, technology transfer and capacity building, needed to be addressed and made operational immediately.

"As a fast-developing Asian nation, Malaysia upholds the principles of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, and the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities'," he added.

While acknowledging the threat posed by climate change to humanity, Anifah noted that Malaysia had supported the Commonwealth's efforts to address climate change, including the proposed establishment of the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, to be hosted by Mauritius.

"The hub aims to assist small and vulnerable states with acute capacity needs to access climate finance," he said.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Anifah took the opportunity to have a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Alphanso Browne, to discuss relevant issues of mutual interest.

"The meeting which took place yesterday, provided a good opportunity for both countries to further enhance cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, particularly political, economic and people-to-people relations," Wisma Putra said in a statement.

In 2014, the total bilateral trade between both countries was valued at US\$8.62 million (RM36.69 million), with total exports of US\$8.5 million (RM36.18 million) and imports of US\$0.12 million (RM0.51 million).

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