

CoP6. This said, failure at Cop5 would have certainly have doomed prospects for a positive outcome at Cop6.

9. Developing Countries: As the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, Michael Zamit-Cutajar had outlined in Warsaw and Ottawa, the main challenge of CoP5 was to find a balance between issues of primary importance to the Annex 1 countries (including Canada) connected to the Kyoto Protocol, such as the mechanisms, the emerging compliance regime and sinks on one hand, and issues connected to the Convention essential for developing countries, such as technology transfer, capacity building, adaptation and "compensation" (articles 4.8 & 4.9) and communications by non-Annex 1 parties. Once again, the negotiations featured increased engagement from AOSIS and African delegations. Behind the scenes, Canada, in close cooperation with France, set in place a dialogue amongst Francophone nations aimed at increasing the capacity of this group (composed for the most part of a large number of African countries) to participate in the convention and protocol (notably the CDM). Francophone countries will now work together as a group in a series of workshops and meetings in the year leading up to CoP6.

10. Given the inherent difficulties of dealing with articles 4.8/4.9, where Annex 1 countries wanted to demonstrate interest in dealing with the concerns of the least developed and most vulnerable countries (notably found in Africa and AOSIS) while conceding a very minimum to the OPEC countries led by Saudi Arabia, special effort was placed on sending early, positive signals on a decision on capacity building. In addition to its ongoing influential position shepherding progress on technology transfer, Candel played a central role in formulating decisions on both non-Annex 1 communications and capacity building. The latter, which the G-77 & China had spent considerable effort developing prior to the CoP, was of particular importance. The marked progress and good spirit evident in the initial debate and throughout the contact groups and "friends of the chair" meetings in the first week helped promote a positive working atmosphere across the wide range of negotiations, notably those addressing the mechanisms, where visible progress at Cop5 was essential. It will be essential to continue this positive spirit through progress in workshops and negotiations in the subsidiary bodies over the coming year. One important but yet unknown factor will be the role of Nigeria, which at CoP5 intervened primarily as an OPEC country (as opposed to a member of the African Group), but which will assume the chair of the G-77 & China for the year 2000.

11. To some extent, the good will which prevailed at CoP5 between Annex 1 and the developing countries was made possible by the absence of confrontation on the issue of voluntary commitments by developing countries. The issue of the adequacy of commitments (article 4.2 a & b), used intensively to place voluntary commitments on the table(although ultimately without success) at CoP4 was placed in abeyance at CoP5 by the G-77 & China through procedural means. Kazakhstan's bid to join Annex 1 was also successfully thwarted as the G-77 & China indicated late in the proceedings that they would be unable to join consensus on the issue. Finally, the question of a voluntary target for Argentina, which created so much furor at CoP4, made hardly a ripple at CoP5, as the outgoing administration in Argentina took a low profile approach in presenting its scheme for a voluntary target.