

Beat: News

Joint Statement Between the UNFCCC and some Observer Organizations

COP25 Conference

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Yesterday, an unfortunate security incident took place within the facilities of COP25 during an unplanned protest by some non-governmental observers, which made it necessary to take actions intended to ensure the safety of COP participants and to allow for the continuation of the conference proceedings.

Following this incident, the UNFCCC Secretariat and representatives of the concerned observer organizations met to discuss ways of moving forward.

The UNFCCC Secretariat underlined the importance of participation of observers in the climate change conferences. Since the early days of the UNFCCC, non-governmental organizations have been actively involved, attending sessions and exchanging views with other participants, including with Party delegations. The Secretariat also recognizes that this involvement allows vital experience, expertise, information and perspectives from civil society to be brought into the process to generate new insights and approaches.

At the same time, the Secretariat stressed that with the valuable support of UN Security, it is responsible for ensuring the safety and security of all participants at climate change conferences. Furthermore, it also stressed it has taken efforts to ensure a safe and respectful environment.

The Secretariat highlighted the importance of the Guidelines For The Participation of Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations At Meetings Of the Bodies of the UNFCCC which all conference participants accept that they have read and agree to comply with, along with the Code of Conduct.

Among other provisions, the guidelines establish the following obligations:

“Representatives of NGOs admitted to the sessions of the Conference of the Parties shall cooperate with and comply with requests and instructions from United Nations officials and security staff regarding the use of facilities and access to and conduct within the venues.”^[1]

“Interfering with the movement of participants at any time or location within the venues is not permitted.”^[2]

“Non-governmental observers shall refrain from using the UNFCCC venues for unauthorized demonstrations”^[3]

The Guidelines also clearly indicate: “any behavior not consistent with the approved guidelines may have an impact on the participation of the organization and/or of the individual.”^[4]

Representatives from the concerned non-governmental observer organizations expressed their willingness to abide by the Guidelines as well as the Code of Conduct. They committed to request prior authorization for any future actions at the COP in accordance with established procedure. In light of this renewed commitment, those who took the action on Wednesday, December 11, will be allowed re-entry for the duration of COP25.

The UNFCCC Secretariat remains committed to the inclusiveness and openness of the process and looks forward to strengthening the working relationship with observer organizations.

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