“#WeAreStillIn coalition gives us reason to hope for a new generation of climate leaders in the US”

9 November 2017, Bonn: The press briefing began by addressing the (Republican) elephant in the room: the Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement.

Mariana Panuncio-Feldman, WWF, said the #WeAreStillIn coalition – which includes mayors, governors, business leaders and college presidents, American Indian tribes, faith leaders and more, representing some 130 million Americans – remains committed to climate action and an international agreement to take climate action forward.

“The message they are bringing is a message of hope. It's a message of action. The stories that #WeAreStillIn will be sharing in the coming days are stories of actions they are taking in the United States, stories of the social and economic benefits – in addition to climate ones – that are accruing to their constituencies. And stories of what more can be done in the United States and how they want to play a part in the transformation.”

She said she hoped the participation of these US subnational actors would give the international community confidence in the new generation of US climate leaders.

To a query on the position of this alternative delegation at the climate talks, Panuncio-Feldman pointed to measures that subnational actors are already taking, such as New York City’s newly green building standards or Walmart’s adoption of energy efficiency and renewable power.

“We know that the actions that need to be taken need to be accelerated right now and need to be built further into future in a way that contributes to a transformation of the American economy. But I think that the very concrete and real examples that you're going to hear in coming days are very pertinent to the pre-2020 conversation and show that there is commitment and muscle in the United States to take action on pre-2020 now.”

Camilla Born, E3G, then gave a summary of the status of negotiations under way at the COP. She said negotiators are now reaching the limits of their mandates and outlining the political issues that ministers will take up in the week ahead.

“We're making lots of progress on the technical and process aspects of these discussions. We're flagging up some more political elements that don't fit within a negotiator's mandate and moving more to a conversation that needs to be between ministers in the coming week.

She said good progress has been made with technical questions relating to the rulebook for implementing the Paris Agreement. She also said that the issue of pre-2020 actions had been raised
and that the Fiji Presidency must now consider how to play a constructive role on issues and agenda points that have been raised.

Asked about the relative silence on the important question of finance for adaptation, Born responded that finance is certainly being discussed, though largely at a technical level. She said she sees positive signals ahead of next year's ministerial dialogue on finance which will squarely address this issue.

“Some of the most exciting conversations on this topic have been around some of the work that the multilateral development banks are doing to try to prevent funding of dirty projects within their portfolios, and move their funding much more effectively into projects which support climate action – and which have multiple other benefits in fulfilling these organisations' missions and mandates.”

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About CAN
Climate Action Network (CAN) is a global network of over 1100 NGOs in more than 120 countries working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels.

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