



PIANGO

Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations

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For Immediate Release

International NGOs Meet French President Sarkozy on the Eve of the G20 Summit in Paris

Paris, France (2 November, 2011) — French President, Nicolas Sarkozy met in Paris today with representatives of 26 Non Government Organisations, on the eve of the G20 Summit, opening in Cannes tomorrow.

The French Head of State met with NGO representatives from the Pacific Islands, Africa, Brazil, France, India, the United Kingdom and the United States at the Elysee Palace in Paris this morning. The Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO) was among those present at the meeting.

“President Sarkozy had a very candid conversation with the international NGO community and addressed questions on agriculture and food security, climate financing, the financial transaction tax and tax havens,” said Debbie Singh, PIANGO’s Communications and Advocacy Coordinator. “The President also promised that the final Communiqué at this year’s G20 Summit would be “naming and shaming” at least 11 countries which have been acting as tax havens.”

Discussing innovative financing and climate financing, President Sarkozy said France, the European Commission and Germany were the only ones acting on the issue. He went onto say that he saw the Eurozone as being the lead coalition on the issue, with France in its capacity as Chair of the Summit and Germany driving it at the G20, in light of the support of German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

“PIANGO understands that the draft Communiqué to be released at the end of the G20 Summit on Friday reinforces the need for a reduction in global carbon emissions by 2 degrees. We continue to support the position that emission levels must drop to 1.5 degrees in order for people in vulnerable and small island states, in particular atoll and coastal islands in the Pacific region to stay alive,” Ms Singh said.

On the issue of food security and land distribution, Senegal's Momar Talla Kane asked that France insist that the issue be addressed at a global level in light of the need for small scale producers, peasants and farmers to gain access to land.

World Vision (India) Director Dr Jayakumar Christian said: "In India food security does not connect with malnutrition and it is critical that conversations on food security be measured in terms of nutrition as this is a humiliation that children face on a daily basis."

President Sarkozy said that in the midst of a major global financial crisis, the issue of food security was being addressed for the first time, at this year's G20 Summit saying that issues on this year's agenda illustrated "considerable progress".

"We are trying to make the G20 process more inclusive. It should not be a meeting of only Heads of State. NGOs now have access to the media at the G20 venue and can be at the heart of the Summit. There is no longer need for clashes and violence in order for NGOs to make their voices heard," President Sarkozy said.

Meanwhile, members of the International Forum of NGO Platforms, representing thousands of civil society organisations in both G20 and non G20 countries, are calling on the G20 to deliver fundamental and far-reaching reforms on global economic systems to ensure inclusive and sustainable development and deliver real opportunities for all citizens. Global civil society is also calling on the G20 to become more transparent and accountable for its decisions and policies. (ENDS)

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