

More women needed in climate change talks

By Observer Reporter
Warsaw, Poland

THERE is an urgent need to fund women delegates to attend the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meetings in order to create a gender balance on the issues.

This was the view of delegates at the UNFCCC's 19th Conference of the Parties (COP19) held at the Warsaw National Stadium in Poland. The UNFCCC is a body of 195 member states among them the 54 African countries that Swaziland is part of. A report released by the UNFCCC at the conference on gender composition shows a lower participation of women delegates, with figures ranging between 29 and 37 percent.

Data indicates an even lower participation of women when it comes to the composition of constituted bodies ranging from 11 to 13 percent. This has prompted a strong voice from delegates calling upon governments and interna-



MORE WOMEN: Some of the delegates at the UNFCCC's 19th Conference of the Parties (COP19) held at the Warsaw National Stadium in Poland.

is also part of the negotiating team from her country, it was critical to set up a fund to support women participants from poor countries to attend UNFCCC negotiations. "The fund could be established within

of civil society organisations to broaden the scope of women at the negotiations.

She is a beneficiary of a fund established in 2009 by the governments of Finland and Iceland, to support women from the poor islands to attend the negotiations.

"I wouldn't be here had it not been for this fund," said Wragg. Asger Ryhl from the United Nations agency UNWomen con-

so that we're able to hold each other accountable."

However, said Ryhl, there is a need for member countries to confront the structural gender inequalities at all levels and also bring men on board.

But women need to be trained to ensure their adequate participation at the climate change processes, said Anne Kolker, a negotiator from the United States.

2013 in Top 10 of warmest years

MORE evidence to prove that the earth is getting warmer was presented by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) which observed that the year 2013 is going to be among the top 10 warmest since 1850.

In a provisional statement to inform negotiations at COP19, WMO Secretary General Michel Jarraud said the atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases reached new highs in 2012 and unprecedented levels in 2013.

"This means that we are committed to a warmer future," said Jarraud. "The impact on our water cycle is already becoming apparent as manifested by droughts, floods and extreme weather precipitation."

It is for that reason that developing nations are appealing to the industrialised states to reduce their carbon emissions and also release funds to help their poor counterparts adapt to climate change.

Proposal

Yesterday, more than 130 developing countries had put forward a proposal for an international institutional mechanism that could channel fast financial support to countries devastated by climate impacts such as tropical storms. Sven Harmeling, from the non-governmental organisation, CARE, told reporters that now that developing countries have taken the lead, it is up to developed countries to seriously engage in this proposal.

Green Peace head of delegation, Martin Kaiser, said carbon pollution levels had to be reduced, not only to keep the door ajar to a safe climate, but also to boost