

Decisions for implementation of Paris Agreement adopted

Katowice, 18 Dec (Meena Raman) –Decisions for the implementation of the Paris Agreement (PA) were adopted as a package by the Conference of Parties meeting as the Parties to the PA (CMA), late night on Saturday, 15 Dec, a day later than initially scheduled for the closure of the climate talks in Katowice, Poland.

The decisions for the PA implementation, known as the PA work programme (PAWP), were forwarded as a package to the CMA by the 24th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 24) for its consideration and adoption and comprises 133 pages. The CMA then adopted the PAWP package of decisions.

The **G77 and China**, in its assessment of the overall package of decisions, said that it “did not see a level of balance”, as it saw “a mitigation regime in the making, with urgent adaptation needs relegated to second class status.” It also expressed fear that the regime ignores the principle of common-but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) between developed and developing countries.

The **Like-minded developing countries (LMDC)** expressed “disappointment that developed countries resisted any attempt to include equity as a holistic consideration in the global stocktake (GST), which would form the basis for enhancing action.” (Article 14.1 of the PA stipulates that the GST, which is an assessment of the collective progress of Parties towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and its long-term goals, has to be carried out in light of equity and which will take place in 2023.)

India also made a statement expressing its reservation that the decision on the GST did not operationalise equity and was not in accordance with the mandate and relevant provisions of the PA, adding that “equity must be considered and be

part of the input, the technical assessment as well as the output, including its considerations throughout the GST process.”

Developed countries on the other hand, such as the **European Union** and the **Umbrella Group**, in welcoming the PAWP decisions, stressed that clear guidance is now in place to Parties on the information to be provided for their future actions, as well as a robust transparency framework that would allow Parties to track progress of their actions.

In the decision on the information to be provided for the nationally determined contributions (NDCs), Parties are required to provide the information necessary for clarity, transparency and understanding (CTU) in relation to their second and subsequent NDCs (as Parties have already provided their information for the first set of NDCs which take effect from 2020 -2025 or 2030, depending on the duration of their NDCs.) The decision also states that the guidance on information necessary for CTU is without prejudice to the inclusion of components other than mitigation. This is viewed by developing countries as a major win, on the scope of NDCs, which not only relate to mitigation contributions, but may include an adaptation component, along with the means of implementation necessary.

In the transparency framework decision, flexibility is provided for developing countries that need it in the light of their capacities and this is to be self-determined. This includes flexibilities in the scope, frequency and level of reporting, and in the scope of the review that is to be undertaken.

As regards the decision on finance, on the ex-ante information to be provided on the projected levels of public financial resources to developing countries under Article 9.5, developed countries are requested to provide the information starting

in 2020. On setting a new collective quantified goal on finance, Parties agreed to initiate in Nov 2020, deliberations on the goal from a floor of USD 100 per year. Developed countries were reluctant to make progress on the finance issues until they had a clearer view of where developing countries stood on the other matters related to the PAWP, especially on NDCs and the transparency framework.

Apart from the PAWP decisions, the COP decision (1/C.P. 24) also includes decisions on the following matters: high-level ministerial dialogue on climate finance; implementation and ambition (covering the pre 2020 and post 2020 timeframe); the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) 1.5 Special Report; the Talanoa Dialogue; and the UN Climate Summit in 2019.

(Analysis of the decisions adopted will be carried in the further TWN Updates).

Parties were expecting clean texts of the draft decisions to become available on Thursday, 13 Dec, under the authority of COP 24 President, Michal Kurtyka. However, given the divergent positions on various matters, the COP President continued to consult groups of Parties behind closed doors, similar to the process adopted in Paris, in arriving at compromises.

Delegates waited patiently the whole day and night of Friday, 14 Dec for the clean texts, but none arrived until morning of Saturday, 15 Dec. The closing plenary was finally convened around 9 pm on Saturday, 15 Dec and went on till close to midnight.

COP and CMA plenary

Kurtyka, in his opening remarks of the COP 24 plenary, said that the “night was long and it took a day to put together the PAWP (decisions)” and that this was a “big responsibility”.

Prior to the forwarding of the decisions to the CMA for adoption, the COP paid tribute to Madame Bernarditas Mueller, a veteran and seasoned climate change negotiator from the Philippines, who had passed away on Friday, Dec. 14. The COP 24 President said that ‘Ditas’ as she was popularly known, was a “pillar of climate change negotiations, with her passion, kindness, friendly disposition and mentorship of all” and that she will be remembered with profound admiration. Delegates rose to observe a minute of silence in her honour. Kurtyka also informed

delegates that the book of condolences would be sent to her family.

(At a eulogy session held throughout the day on Saturday, 15 Dec, numerous delegates, both from developing and developed countries paid emotional tributes to the ‘giant’, ‘champion’, and ‘mentor’, with so many unable to control their grief and tears in what was a very moving gathering. They also signed the book of condolences).

In paving the way for the adoption of the PAWP decisions, the COP President Kurtyka said that it had been a “long road” with delegates working for three years on the ‘package’, which was not easy to find agreement on, given the specifics and technical details. He said that the COP Presidency did its best to listen to Parties and to leave no one behind, expressing what was a “hard and daunting” task. He described the deal as being “in fragile balance” and that “all Parties had to give and gain,” adding that the “overall interest of all was balanced in a fair manner”.

When the COP President invited Parties to adopt decision 1/C.P. 24, which includes the PAWP package of decisions, India requested for the floor and there was pin-drop silence at the plenary, with delegates wondering what was about to happen.

India said that it had reservations as regards the decision on Article 14 of the PA on the global stocktake (GST), but in a “constructive spirit to ensure the process moves forward” it would express its reservations later, (after the decisions were gavelled).

The COP then adopted the decision to forward the PAWP package of decisions to the CMA for consideration and adoption. The COP was then suspended for the convening of the CMA and at the CMA, the PAWP package of decisions were adopted, to applause and a standing ovation, as the President of the CMA, Kurtyka (who is also the President of COP 24), said that this was a “historic moment”.

The UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Patricia Espinosa then read a message from the UN Secretary-General, who said that a “solid road map for climate action” had been put in place, adding that the science had shown the need for enhanced ambition and that “ambition will be in the centre of the UN Summit to be held next year” and that Parties had “a duty to reach for more”.

Closing statements of Parties at joint closing plenary

At the joint closing plenary of the COP, Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) and the CMA, groups of Parties expressed their views.

Egypt for the **G77 and China** in expressing congratulations for the tireless efforts of the COP Presidency in helping overcome the obstacles at the talks, it said that the Group was happy with the outcome. However, in assessing the overall package, it did not see a level of balance. It said the group saw a mitigation regime in the making, with urgent adaptation needs relegated to second class status. It also expressed fear that the regime ignores the principle of CBDR between developed and developing countries. The G77 also underscored the importance of CBDR and equity in implementing the outcomes of the decisions, and that given the different capacities between developed and developing countries, differences could not be glossed over. It also said that developing countries would do their fair share of the lifting and that they will show ambition but that this was not a zero sum game and that all should benefit. It also hoped that we can find a path for the well-being of the planet.

In remembering Madame Ditas, the G77 spokesman, Egyptian Ambassador **Wael Aboulmagd** described her as a genuinely compassionate and caring friend and a mentor to many, and that the world had lost a devoted warrior who fought for future generations, leaving a legacy of love and compassion.

Malaysia for the **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** in underlining the principle of equity and CBDR said that “It is crucial to recall why developed countries are developed and we are developing. Historically, the largest share of the carbon/emissions space has been used by developed countries in Western Europe and North America as they industrialized fueled by the use of fossil fuel - and their economies prospered. This was the genesis of climate change. Developing countries are also entitled to develop and grow sustainably. For this, the remaining carbon space must be shared equitably. This is the premise of the Convention and its progeny - the PA. We owe this to the poor and vulnerable who are paying —sometimes with their lives in our parts of the world. This is why equity assumes a major and central role in meeting the climate

change challenges. That is why equity must be operationalised and meaningfully.”

Said the LMDC further, “The cumulative historical emissions of developed countries with historically 1/6th of the world's population account for more than three fourths of the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. The developing world accounted for one fourth of CO₂ emissions with historically 5/6th of the world's population. Therein lies the inequity of ignoring the historical cumulative emissions in the GST when requiring countries to plan their ambitions. Else you put an unequal burden on us for what developed countries are responsible for.”

It expressed “disappointment that developed countries resisted any attempt to include equity as a holistic consideration in the GST, which would form the basis for enhancing action.” Regardless, it said that “it is our understanding that equity must be considered in the GST: the input, the technical assessment and the output. This is how equity is operationalised to fulfil the mandate in Article 14.1 of the PA”. It also added that it was a matter of public record which was disclosed in Paris that the pre-2020 pledges of developing countries as well as their NDCs were more ambitious than those of the developed countries.

Malaysia said that the LMDC, although pained by some of the provisions (in the decisions), will work constructively to move forward in a spirit of compromise and in interpreting the decision in the context of preserving its fundamental elements and ethos.

Referring to the passing of Madame Ditas, the LMDC said that she was one of the Convention's founders and its greatest stalwarts and that in the meetings leading up to the PA in 2015, she was ailing, but this did not stop her from participating in the process, lending her expertise to G77 and particularly LMDC. “Even as she approached her final hour and could no longer hold and read the messages, she asked her daughter to read to her the reports of our present proceedings, daily”, said the LMDC spokesperson. Malaysia recalled her comments made almost a decade ago where she had said that “There is so much at stake. Get it right, and the world has the chance to both halt catastrophic climate change and find a better path to develop. Get it wrong and all the injustices and disadvantages that developing countries now face will be magnified 1000 times in the coming years.”

In conclusion, the LMDC said that “we hear reports that the city where this agreement was born is experiencing extraordinary turbulence (in reference to the ‘yellow vests’ riots on the streets of Paris). If we get it right, we insulate the PA from any such impact.”

Ethiopia, speaking for the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** said that “science is not up for negotiation” and welcomed the IPCC Special Report. It said that there is a good basis for all Parties to implement the PA but regretted that work on Article 6 (on cooperative approaches, including market mechanisms) could not be completed as this could incentivise more ambitious NDCs. (The Article 6 negotiations could not be finalised in Katowice, due to differences in views and positions of Parties on the details of the mechanisms).

Maldives, speaking for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** said that Madame Ditas “was a giant in this process and a tireless champion for climate justice and developing countries” and that “she will be missed greatly by our small islands family.”

On the decisions adopted, it said the texts reflects “balance”, and though AOSIS was not fully satisfied, it recognized the “compromises needed to be made to move forward.” On the IPCC 1.5 Special Report, it said that it “represents the best available science on climate change and the findings are unsettling, to say the least. Unless we dramatically change how the world generates and consumes energy in about the next decade, the opportunity to hold global warming to 1.5 degrees C may irretrievably slip away.” It expressed disappointment that Parties were unable to agree to welcome the report and its findings. On ambition, AOSIS urged leaders to build on the progress made during the Talanoa Dialogue, “by exploring how existing solutions can provide avenues for them to immediately ramp up climate action.” It was also pleased to see “binding language” in the PAWP decision on the need to provide information for CTU with a clear focus on mitigation. It was however concerned that the review of information would only be in 2028, and believed that this was too late. On finance, it said that climate change is already fast outpacing our ability to respond and we will keep falling behind unless developed countries deliver on the commitments they made in Paris, adding that real progress on adaptation demands scaling up

finance, commensurate with the increasingly severe challenges we face.

It also saw progress on ‘loss and damage’, particularly the explicit language in transparency and the GST, stating further that real support to address it still needs to be delivered soon.

Gabon for the **African Group** in acknowledging the Katowice outcome on the PAWP, called for commitments to be shown on the flow of adequate and enhanced provision of the means of implementation on finance, technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries to unlock the potential to combat climate and enable adaptation efforts.

India, speaking for the **BASIC** countries (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) said it was happy that the guidelines for the implementation of the PA have been formulated. It also recalled its commitment to the principles of equity and CBDR and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), in the light of different national circumstances to ensure climate justice to the poor and vulnerable people across the globe. It added that the COP decisions rightly signify the importance of enhanced pre-2020 action and welcomed the conclusion of the Talanoa Dialogue and remained certain that its spirit will continue to inspire us in future. The BASIC also underscored they have chosen is a path of progress and non-regression in climate actions.

India in its national capacity presented its reservation on the PAWP outcome as follows: “Article 14.1 of the PA mandates that the GST process has to be conducted in the light of equity and best available science. The decision paragraph in its current form does not operationalise equity and is not in accordance with the mandate and relevant provisions of the PA. Equity must be considered and be part of the input, the technical assessment as well as the output, including its considerations throughout the GST process. Reference of Article 2 in its entirety in the paragraph 6(b) of this decision is an essential requirement for operationalizing equity.”

Saudi Arabia for the **Arab Group** said that it was committed to the PA, in the context of the CBDR principle and in furthering sustainable development. It said that it had many concerns with the outcome but demonstrated flexibility in arriving at the decisions.

Colombia for the **Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)** underscored the importance of the intense technical work done to enable the implementation of the PA.

China said that great flexibility was demonstrated to arrive at the PAWP which was comprehensive, balanced and robust, consistent with the principle of CBDR-RC, in the light of national circumstances. This, it said was a victory for multilateralism.

The **European Union (EU)** said that the target for limiting temperature rise under the PA was still within reach and that Parties are heading in the right direction. It said that the Talanoa Dialogue provided the first political opportunity to take stock of the global progress and that there is strong evidence that financial flows are shifting to the low emissions economy. On the PAWP which it called the ‘rulebook’, the EU said that a universal transparency framework was now in place, where Parties improve and progress over time and communicate clear and comparable terms in their actions. It said that the decisions preserves the notion of “contemporary differentiation”, recognising the economic and social evolution of Parties. The results of the GST can be considered as a central innovation and feature of the PA which ensures progression over time and noted that all the current NDCs fall well short (of what is needed to limit temperature rise).

Switzerland for the **Environmental Integrity Group** welcomed the encompassing ‘rulebook’ which it said managed to secure details and robust guidance for collective and national actions. It noted that some rules were legally binding while others were less so and regretted that the work on Article 6 could not be completed, rendering the ‘package’ incomplete.

Australia for the **Umbrella Group** welcomed the decisions adopted, which it said brought the PA “to life”, adding that it provided clear guidance to Parties on the information to be provided for future actions and accounting guidance for their targets. It also highlighted the robust transparency framework that would allow Parties to track progress of their actions. The decisions on the means of implementation provided a strong basis to support the implementation of the PA, it said further, and welcomed the GST to secure strong climate actions.

Philippines in a tribute to Madame Ditas, recalled that she was a prime mover of the Convention, who was referred to as the ‘dragon lady’, ‘lioness of developing countries’ and was loved by many and feared by some, as she spoke for climate justice and mentored negotiators. It said that the world had lost a great citizen and asked all delegates in honouring her by making the Convention and the PA work for all humanity.