

Countries express their expectations for COP 25

Madrid, 3 Dec (Evelyn Teh)- At the final plenary session convened on Dec 2, countries through their various groupings conveyed their expectations for the outcomes of the climate talks held under the UNFCCC, in Madrid, Spain.

Several groups of developing countries, led by the G77 and China also had strong words for the United States (US) for withdrawing from the PA.

Minister of Palestine's Environmental Quality Authority, Adalah Atira, speaking for the **G77 and China** said that "COP25 takes place at a crucial historical juncture. 2020 is quite literally around the corner. This is the year in which Parties' pre-2020 actions under the Convention are supposed to conclude and lay the foundation for future climate actions for Parties to the Paris Agreement (PA). For the G77, success at this COP will be determined by whether or not the decisions will enable all Parties to contribute more effectively and ambitiously in terms of nationally-determined contributions (NDCs) and help developing countries to better adapt, address loss and damage, and continue to pursue and fulfil our right to sustainable development."

In an apparent reference to the United States (US), the G77 Chair expressed deep regret that "a developed State Party that is responsible for emitting almost one-fifth of current annual global emissions and historically responsible for almost one-third of cumulative historical global emissions, has chosen to withdraw from the PA. At the same time, some other developed Parties have chosen not to be part of the second commitment period (2CP) of the Kyoto Protocol (KP), contributing to its non-entry into force before the period expires at the end of 2020." The G77 called on these Parties "to reconsider these choices, particularly given that the COP will

be negotiating important issues relating to ambitions post- 2020".

The G77 Chair also said that "a number of developed countries have also not yet complied with their existing national reporting requirements under the Convention, leading to a lack of transparency in terms of what they have done to reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the pre-2020 period and whether they have lived up to their commitment to take the lead. There should be no backsliding on their transparency commitments even as we continue to negotiate on common transparency formats for the PA that take account of the flexibility needs of developing countries".

"Additionally, long-standing commitments of developed countries under the Convention to provide developing countries with the needed, adequate, and stable financing and technology to implement climate actions continue to be implemented insufficiently. While we welcome the USD 9.7 billion pledged by developed countries to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) at its first replenishment, we underscore that it is significantly below the initial resource mobilization pledge of USD10.2 billion and far short of what developing countries need to enhance their climate action through ambitious NDCs," stressed the G77 Chair further.

Emphasising the need for enhanced ambition by developed country Parties to fulfil their pre-2020 commitments, in particular urgently raising their ambition in relation to emission reduction targets and the provision of support to developing countries, the G77 Chair said that "this is critical to building trust for enhancing ambition by all in the post-2020 period. Pre-2020 implementation issues are therefore important to address from this COP".

Regarding post-2020 actions under the Convention and its PA, the Group said that “recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Reports released in 2018 and 2019 highlight the need for urgent and ambitious action on mitigation and adaptation” adding that “developed country Parties must hence lead in global emission reduction efforts by committing to accelerated emissions reductions from 2020 onward, in order to promote global reductions of emissions on a scale and timeframe within the next decades consistent with the science, and lead in supporting adaptation actions in developing countries”.

The Group also called for “the communication of Long Term Low-Emission Development Strategies that reflect urgency and ambition consistent with the best available science is a critical enabler for enhancing ambition and adequacy of actions. It should also be accompanied by finance flows that are consistent with the demands of such strategies”.

In this regard, the G77 called on developed countries “to show enhanced ambition on the provision of finance, capacity building and technology support to developing countries beginning in 2020, even as we respond based on our different national circumstances to calls to show enhanced ambition on adaptation and mitigation and the pursuit of sustainable development by developing countries when implementing the PA in the post- 2020 period.”

The G77 Chair also said that “adaptation is a key priority climate action for developing countries reeling from the socio- economic, developmental, and environmental impacts, losses, and damages arising from climate change. This means that the outcome of COP25 must not be mitigation-centric. There must be substantive discussions at this COP on adaptation, to ensure that the role of adaptation in addressing climate change is promoted and supported”.

“The review of the Warsaw Implementation Mechanism on Loss and Damage (WIM) is a crucial agenda item for the G77,” said the Minister, adding that “we want to see the WIM become an effective mechanism under the Convention and its PA in addressing the needs of developing countries, especially for enhanced action and support in relation to loss and damage, including financing and technology transfer”.

On response measures, the G77 Chair reaffirmed

“the importance of giving full consideration to identifying necessary actions to meet the specific needs and concerns of developing country Parties arising from the impact of the implementation of response measures, and to avoid the negative economic and social consequences of response measures on developing countries, and that the Forum and the Katowice Committee of Experts need to be made operational through adoption of a 6-year workplan”.

The G77 also expressed concerns “by the application of unilateral coercive or extra-territorial economic measures, including in relation to international trade, which are inconsistent with international law. These actions adversely affect the capabilities of developing countries to finance their efforts in mitigation and adaptation to climate change and hinder their right to access available resources. In this context, it is of utmost importance that all necessary measures be undertaken to ensure the depoliticized flow of international resources by all financial mechanisms under the Convention and its KP and PA to all eligible Parties”.

On Article 6 of the PA (dealing with cooperative approaches involving market and non-market mechanisms), the G77 Chair said that negotiations on this matter “are difficult, contentious and complex, this agenda item should be concluded in a manner that ensures that there is a balanced outcome under Articles 6(2) and 6(4) as well as 6(8) that reflect the diversity of NDCs, ensures environmental integrity, avoids double counting, promotes sustainable development, provides adequate and predictable funds for adaptation, and enables future cooperative arrangements among Parties through the nationally appropriate use of both market and non-market approaches”.

In conclusion, the G77 Chair said that his Group viewed “the cynicism shown by major partners towards multilateralism and the international rules-based order as a whole as a serious challenge that could undermine our collective efforts and interests,” adding that “we have an obligation to act responsibly and to be guided by our joint interests and the science. Unilateralism, isolationism, and pseudo-science threaten our efforts and we have a responsibility to ensure that they do not hijack our ongoing efforts”.

Malaysia, speaking for the **Like-minded developing countries (LMDC)** said that the COP25 outcomes must not be mitigation-centric.

“For our developing countries, adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and addressing the losses and damages that are incurred are extremely important because these are directly related to our countries’ ability to pursue sustainable development and eradicate poverty at the same time as we implement the Convention and its PA”.

The LMDC also said that “progress of pre-2020 actions under the Convention and the KP form the real-world starting landscape for actions and mutual trust in post-2020 period under the Convention and its PA,” stressing the importance of producing “a robust outcome at COP25 to initiate a mechanism to comprehensively assess the progress and gaps in mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation, and to make concrete arrangements on closing the gaps, to ensure these gaps not to be shifted to post-2020 and cause extra burden on all developing countries”.

On Article 6 of the PA, Malaysia said that “all Parties that wish to engage in cooperative approaches can do so by adopting guidance to operationalize multiple metrics. Article 6 guidance should also respect and promote the nationally-determined nature of NDCs and Parties’ rights to pursue sustainable development in line with their national circumstances. Article 6 outcomes must also ensure that the development of non-market mechanisms is given equal importance in terms of the various mechanisms that Parties can use in order to achieve mitigation and adaptation outcomes under their NDCs, and that market mechanisms do not become a primary means by which Annex I developed countries take credit for mitigation outcomes under their NDCs.”

On the review of the work on loss and damage under the WIM, the LMDC said that the mechanism must be “able to respond adequately and fully to the needs of developing countries. This is particularly because the global loss and damage due to climate change may well require financing for developing countries of hundreds of billions of dollars per year by 2030.”

Malaysia also called for “scaled up, adequate, and effective provision of public climate finance from developed to developing countries.”. While it welcomed GCF replenishment pledge amounting to USD9.7 billion, it expressed disappointment that “this is significantly less than the initial resource mobilization pledge of USD10.2 billion and more importantly does not match what

developing countries need in terms of financial support for their climate actions”.

The LMDC also expressed concerns over the application of unilateral coercive economic measures that affect the capacities of developing countries to finance their efforts in mitigation and adaptation to climate change. “In this context, it is of utmost importance for all necessary measures to be undertaken to depoliticize the flow of international financial resources such as through the GEF mechanism,” it added further.

Egypt, on behalf of the **Africa Group** said that the UNFCCC has reported inventory data from Annex I countries (excluding economies in transition) that “the total aggregate GHG emissions excluding LULUCF (land use, land-use change and forestry) decreased only by 1.6% over the period 1990 to 2017”. It expressed deep concern that “some Annex I Parties have increased their emissions by up to 140%. This constitutes a significant increase and is substantially contributing to the climate emergency”.

“Several Annex I Parties, with the historical responsibility to act and the capacity to respond to climate change have not fulfilled their commitments or lived up to the challenge of addressing climate change. Furthermore, with the withdrawal of one major party to the PA, approximately 18% of the global emissions will not be accounted for in the collective effort to address climate change under the PA. We note that this same Party has again not provided their national communication and biennial reports which is a clear commitment under the Convention,” said Egypt further.

The Africa Group said that “adaptation is a core and fundamental element and aim of the PA to strengthen the global response to threat of climate change” and expressed the concern over “the lack of space and attention provided to this core element”, adding that “all African countries are facing different adverse impacts” and that “African governments are already paying 2 to 9 % of their GDP to fund adaptation actions which is around 20% of the estimated annual costs of adaptation in Africa. This is done despite the existing financial constraints and competing needs for social and economic development”. “It is important to discuss the global goal for adaptation and develop modalities and procedures for the recognition of adaptation

efforts, enhancing the implementation of adaptation action and reviewing the adequacy of adaptation support. A failure to do so goes against one of the aims of the PA,” said Egypt.

The Group, while stressing that the PA is a treaty to raise ambition and implementation it noticed that the Agreement “is becoming treaty consumed with reporting and communicating rather than addressing the core priority of implementation,” and called for the COP and the CMA “to facilitate raising ambition both on mitigation and adaptation in equal and balanced manner and more importantly facilitate implementation of action on the ground”. It also stressed “the importance of grant-based resources for African countries, particularly for adaptation. Climate ambition and action should not be seen as a proxy for increasing the debt burden of African countries”, added Egypt further.

China on behalf of the **BASIC Group** stressed that the key outcomes of COP25 are to conclude negotiations under Article 6 of the PA, to achieve progress on climate finance, and to produce robust outcomes on addressing pre-2020 gaps. The group also stated that “public finance is the fulcrum of enhanced climate ambition by developing countries, and developed countries must honour their climate finance commitments of providing USD 100 billion per annum by 2020 for developing countries in a transparent and grant-based manner.”

On the pre-2020 stocktake, the China drew special attention to the fact that “pre- 2020 ambition is an important agenda for developing countries,” adding that “pre-2020 is not about time scale, but about commitments. When commitments are fulfilled, the mission of pre-2020 is accomplished”. The Group expressed concerns “about the pre 2020 gaps due to insufficient and unfulfilled commitments by developed countries in terms of mitigation, adaptation and provision of means of implementation. The time is ripe to constructively address this issue and devise a concrete way forward. Developed countries must be encouraged to act expeditiously and responsibly to close the pre-2020 implementation gap so there is no transfer of burden to developing countries in the post-2020 period. It is important to produce a concrete outcome at COP25 of arrangements to comprehensively assess the pre-2020 progress and gaps and to

close the gaps by developed countries in post-2020 period.”

Belize on behalf of the **Alliance of Small-Island States (AOSIS)** expressed disappointment “by inadequate action by developed countries in accordance with the principle of CBDR-RC, and outraged by the dithering and retreat of one of the most culpable polluters from the PA. Retreat and inaction are not hallmarks of leadership. In the midst of a climate emergency, they are tantamount to sanction ecocide. They reflect profound failure to honour collective global commitment to protect the most vulnerable”.

The AOSIS also said that “COP 25 must demonstrate how far we will push for ambition to avert ecocide. COP 25 must signal our resolve to achieve a 1.5-degree C world... All countries, especially developed countries with historic responsibility for humanity’s greatest challenge, must present bold plans in 2020 and facilitate the means to unleash a wave of unprecedented climate action.” Belize said that “the challenge is so great that COP 25 must trigger ‘Our Decade of Ambition’. This session must establish key milestones to lay the groundwork for 2020 and beyond,” it added further.

It also expressed that the WIM review must yield robust, and a fit for purpose mechanism. “We must quantify loss and damage and risks, and carry out assessments of risk in vulnerable developing countries. Hence, the GCF focus should be expanded to address loss and damage, and this requires dedicated emergency response window to enable decision making 7 days after experiencing loss and damage from extreme weather events,” said AOSIS further.

Saudi Arabia on behalf of the **Arab Group** stated that it was imperative to emphasize the principle of CBDR-RC and for the provision of financial, technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries to achieve their NDCs, while being in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. As regards Article 6 of the PA, is emphasised the need to recognise the “national circumstances” of Parties in their respective NDCs and facilitate ways to maximize the cooperative approach.

Bhutan on behalf of the **Least Developed Countries** also emphasised that the rules agreed to for the implementation of Article 6 of the PA must ensure environmental integrity and incentivise

cooperation, and not open up loopholes that shift emissions between Parties. It must also provide resources to the Adaptation Fund through a shared proceeds.

Brazil on behalf of **Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay (ABU)** pointed out that the Doha Amendment is the centrepiece to pre-2020 commitments and should contribute to the work post 2020. Any shift in pre-2020 gaps to developing countries is unacceptable against equity and CBDR-RC, it added.

Venezuela on behalf of the **Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA)** stressed that NDCs should include adaptation as a priority and reflect flexibility to recognise the different circumstances of countries. It also called for creating a financial facility to support the WIM.

Finland, speaking for the **European Union (EU)** referred to the recent reports of the World

Meteorological Organisation, UNEP Emissions Gap Report and the IPCC Special Reports which have all indicated that the world is not on the right track towards emissions reduction. The EU expressed their priorities towards closing that gap. It also looked forward towards a successful second review of the WIM. It also wanted to see “robust and comprehensive” accounting rules for Article 6 of the PA to avoid double-counting;

Switzerland on behalf the **Environment Integrity Group (EIG)** urged Parties to update the governance of the Adaptation Fund.

Australia on behalf of the **Umbrella Group** stated that “we must ensure strong outcomes and robust rules on Article 6 of the PA to facilitate market and non-market solutions to be concluded in this COP”.