

## Historical responsibility of developed countries for climate crisis cannot be ignored

11 Nov, Glasgow (TWN) – Developing countries reminded the developed countries that they cannot talk about future emissions without addressing their historical and past emissions which had contributed to the climate crisis. They were also told that the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) between developed and developing countries recognised in the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement (PA) were not negotiable and are not mere slogans but must be reflected and operationalised in the decisions taken in Glasgow.

They also pointed out that 60 per cent of the carbon space had been occupied by developed countries with only 18 per cent of the world population and that the historical responsibility of the developed countries in causing the climate crisis could not be ignored, stressing further that in the context of the concept of equitable distribution of atmospheric space, Parties could not just could talk about future emissions and not address the past.

These remarks were made by **Bolivia** on behalf of the **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** at the ongoing climate talks in Glasgow, on Nov 10, in response to draft texts presented by the UK Presidency on the overarching or cover decisions (referred to as 1/CP.26, 3/CMA.1 and 1/CMP.16), corresponding to the three governing bodies, COP 26, 3rd session of the Conference of Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 3) and 16th session of the Kyoto Protocol Parties (CMP 16).

Similar sentiments were also reflected by **BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China)**, the **Africa** and the **Arab groups** and **Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay (ABU)**. They also referred to the texts being “imbalanced” and “mitigation-centric”, calling on the Presidency to provide draft texts that reflect the spirit of the PA rather than introduce new concepts and ideas that departed from the mandates under the Convention and the PA.

Other developing groups such as the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**, the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)**, **Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)** supported the mitigation section of the draft texts and called on the Presidency to strengthen language on finance, adaptation and loss and damage. Developed countries’ interventions also supported the mitigation section of the draft texts and proposed strengthening it further. Nearly all the groups said they would send their written comments to the Presidency.

The developed countries on the other hand were happy with the texts on mitigation. The **United States (US)** did not want any reference to the principle of CBDR in the operational paragraphs of the draft decisions, nor for any references to the ‘carbon budget’.

**Bolivia** for the **LMDC** also said the draft texts were mitigation centric, with not enough emphasis on adaptation, finance, loss and damage, technology and capacity building and that it was not in a position to support the draft texts in their

current form. It emphasised that the draft texts were an attempt to rewrite the PA, and introduced concepts such as nature based solutions (NBS) that the Parties to the UNFCCC had not discussed. Bolivia said that the mitigation section attempted to develop parallel processes instead of following the PA. It gave the example of proposals such as work programme to scale up mitigation ambition, calls for annual update to NDCs and getting together the high level authorities involved in summits. The PA has a clear roadmap for implementing NDCs which must be respected, it said, adding that the draft texts were drafted in a manner as if to shift the historical responsibility of the Annex 1 countries (developed countries in the Convention) to non-Annex 1 countries and it could not accept this. “Equity and CBDR are not negotiable for us. These are the key pillars of the Convention and the PA,” emphasised Bolivia.

It also said that the draft texts did not address the lack of fulfilment of the pre-2020 commitments by developed countries, and did not agree to the introduction of new goals such as net zero by 2050 for each country in the draft text, and called on developed countries for real emissions reduction by 2030. It reminded Parties that the cover decisions were not a “shopping list”.

Bolivia stressed that mitigation is a collective effort, with differentiation among Annex 1 and non-Annex 1 countries. “At COP 26, it seems we will delete the concept that developed countries will take the lead. It seems there is an attempt to rewrite the Convention and the PA,” said Bolivia further.

**India** for the **BASIC** also said that balance was lacking in the draft texts and the mitigation section offered a highly “prescriptive” approach via proposals such as revising NDCs by 2022, annual ministerial roundtables on mitigation and regularly updating long-term strategies (LTS), adding that the same approach was not reflected in finance. It also emphasized on the role of historical cumulative emissions, adding that while future emissions would have impact, the draft texts should speak to the cumulative stock of emissions that have caused temperature increase of 1.1°C compared to pre-industrial levels. Principles of eq-

uity, CBDR and national determination need to be emphasized in several critical aspects of the draft texts, said India, adding that nature is a victim of global warming.

On references to fossil fuels in the text (which refers to calls on Parties “to accelerate that the phasing out of coal and fossil fuel subsidies”) India said that all fossil fuels need to be phased out, particularly by the developed countries and developing countries need to be able to use their fair share of the global carbon budget in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. It added that attempts to renegotiate the PA or set a new NDC enhancement regime would not have support from the BASIC countries. It also stressed that the unfulfilled pre-2020 commitments of developed countries should not be passed to the developing countries and that the core issue was the over use of the carbon budget to maintain the temperature goals of the PA which must be addressed.

The **Africa Group** stressed that the draft texts must be in line with the Convention and the PA’s legal obligations and guiding principles for implementation and lamented that the texts did not acknowledge that the largest share of historical and current global emissions of greenhouse gases originated in developed countries. Africa further said that most paragraphs on finance, technology and capacity-building were “non-operative” clauses and would not facilitate ambition and implementation. The Africa Group also said that the UNFCCC is the formal process for agreement on obligations to address climate change and expressed concern that other parallel initiatives might overshadow important work under the UNFCCC. In relation to net zero, the Africa group said that text should recognize that peaking of greenhouse gas emissions would take longer for developing countries and for mitigation efforts to be reflected on the on the basis of equity, and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty.

**Saudi Arabia**, speaking for the **Arab Group**, also said that the texts were not acceptable since they were diverging from the Convention and the PA.

They said further iterations of the text must ensure balance between mitigation and adaptation as well as in the reflection of the temperature goal.

The **ABU** said it favoured strong language on CBDR, which is the key pillar of the PA and cautioned against introducing concepts that were not multilaterally defined. The group also suggested that the PA must not be rewritten and some of the paragraphs proposed under the mitigation section were not in line with the PA. They further added that the PA had in place processes such as the Global Stocktake which would assess global efforts and that there was no need for new processes or ministerial roundtables on ambition.

The other G77 sub groups such as **AOSIS**, **LDCs** and **AILAC** stressed on mitigation ambition and supported references to ‘science’, ‘ambition’, 1.5°C and revision of NDCs, role of youth and non-state actors in the draft texts.

The **US**’s description of imbalance was that there were “four times as many references to adaptation” compared to mitigation and “three times as many references to finance” compared to mitigation in the draft texts. The US added that it did not support references to “carbon budget” and would propose alternative language and other suggestions to the COP Presidency in writing. The US also said references to adaptation finance should be an “individual, rather

than collective goal”. It lent its support to the mitigation section of the draft texts as a “floor for further work” and wanted language on CBDR taken out of the operative paragraphs and reflected only in the preamble.

The **European Union (EU)** supported references to NBS and stressed on the importance of science, ambition and keeping 1.5°C alive. The EU also supported proposals establishing work programme to scale up “mitigation ambition”, leaders’ summits on ambition, for long-term strategies to be in line with 1.5°C and a ministerial roundtable at COP 27.

**Switzerland for the Environment Integrity Group (EIG)** supported the mitigation elements in the text and suggested including text calling on Parties to explain how their NDCs were compatible with 1.5°C and that “major economies” must be called on to take the leadership in reduction of emissions.

Following the discussions, the COP Presidency concluded that they would work on new versions of the draft texts which would be released “as soon as possible”.

Intense negotiations will continue on the cover decisions, with two days remaining for Parties to arrive at decisions in Glasgow.