

## Mismatch between progress in negotiations and outside declarations

Glasgow, 8 Nov (Meena Raman) – At the end of the first week of the Glasgow climate talks, media attention has been about declarations and initiatives among governments on the side-lines of the process, rather than on the actual negotiations inside the Conference venue of COP 26, giving the impression that much progress is being made in advancing international climate cooperation.

Unknown to many, the rhetoric outside is not matched by what is happening in the actual negotiations, on many key issues especially on finance, adaptation and loss and damage, which are key issues for developing countries.

Deep concerns have been raised by climate justice groups, movements and youth marching on the streets with 150,000 in Glasgow and many thousands more around the world, that these declarations are nothing more than greenwashing and a smokescreen for the lack of real and urgent action, especially on the part of developed countries.

The first week had begun with a World Leaders Summit held on 1st and 2nd Nov and saw leaders echoing alarm bells on the state of the climate with calls for more climate action from all countries and increased finance for developing countries.

However, the meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB) of the Conference closed on 6 Nov, with

conclusions on various matters with texts in brackets transmitted (signaling divergences) for further work to the COP 26 Presidency.

At the start of second week of the talks, Alok Sharma, the COP 26 President, will hold an informal stock-take morning of 8 Nov to report on the work done during the first week and to inform Parties on how work will proceed in week two. He has produced a note on how he intends to advance further work to secure the decisions out of Glasgow. In his note, Sharma has indicated that work will advance on three tracks with:

- ministerial consultations which would focus on outstanding political issues;
- continued technical negotiations on a limited set of issues, into which emerging political agreements can be incorporated (drawing on the SB Chairs and already mandated co-facilitators); and
- continued presidency consultations, including on the overarching cover decisions (preceding the decisions on specific issues) for the COP, CMP (meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol) and CMA (meeting of Parties to the Paris Agreement).

Sharma also outlined that he will invite a representative group of Ministers to lead informal consultations on the small number of topics which will require political attention in the second week. He expressed in his note that the state of the negotiations under the SBs will determine

which issues require consideration and that he will announce the designated teams of ministerial co-facilitators during the informal stock-taking plenary to be held on Monday, 8 Nov.

Sharma also said in his note that he will be asking the designated ministerial co-facilitators to try to rapidly progress toward consensus texts and will impress on all ministerial and other co-facilitators that full transparency is essential, as is inclusiveness, in all the consultations to be held. The COP 26 President also stated that he will convene regular joint stocktaking plenaries to report back on the status of the ongoing negotiations and that status reports will also be posted regularly on the UNFCCC website, including draft texts as they emerge.

## STATE OF PROGRESS ON SOME KEY ISSUES

TWN spoke to several developing country negotiators on some of the key issues, which showed developed countries blocking progress.

### *Climate finance*

On the new collective quantified goal on finance which is to be decided by 2025, it appears that developed countries were unwilling to engage in the discussions for a robust process for establishing the needs of developing countries, but were instead proposing procedural decisions with no substance. Developed countries have suggested in-session workshops and seminars to determine the needs of developing countries and are opposed to a structured process designed to deliver a meaningful outcome on the new finance goal as advanced by developing countries.

Also disturbing, they said, is the push by developed countries in issues about who are supposed to provide the finance and who should be the recipients of such support. Developing countries countered developed countries in this regard, pointing out that the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement (PA) clearly provide that developed countries are to provide and mobilise the financial support and that all developing countries are eligible to such financing. Developing

country negotiators are deeply concerned that attempts are still being made to depart and reinterpret the Convention and the PA.

Developed countries also want to end the agenda item on long-term climate finance (LTF) under the Convention, saying that since there are processes under the PA for this, there is therefore no need to continue discussion on the LTF. Developing countries in response have said that there is need for an in-house assessment of the delivery of USD 100 billion per year commitment under the Convention, that therefore, the LTF agenda item must continue under the COP. They expressed dismay that developed countries equate the biennial communications under Article 9.5 of the PA on their public sources of finance to be provided as a replacement for the LTF item under the COP.

Developed countries also continue resisting proposals for having an operational definition of climate finance, to remove any fudging of what exactly should be counted.

### *Adaptation*

On adaptation, developing country negotiators revealed the challenges faced in the first week with conflicts in schedule as adaptation issues were being dealt with in parallel. A key issue of contention is over the global goal on adaptation (GGA). Developing countries have pointed out that Article 7 of the PA refers to the GGA, with a view to enhancing capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerability, which are elements that have to be operationalised, requiring its definition in a quantitative and qualitative manner. There have been proposals from the Africa Group in this regard, which is supported by other developing countries for the matter to be dealt with under the CMA.

The Africa Group has tabled a proposal “to launch a comprehensive two-year work programme starting in 2022 to enable the full and sustained operationalization and implementation of the GGA in order to ensure an adequate adaptation response in the context of Article 2, with a view to enhancing adaptation

action and implementation, to enable assessment of progress towards achieving the GGA, the deviation from an increasing trajectory of impacts and vulnerabilities, and contribute to the global stocktake, and to report to the CMA annually on its progress.”

According to negotiators who informed TWN, the United States (US) is opposed to such proposals, and prefer the issue of the GGA to be worked on by the Adaptation Committee instead of having a separate process for the elaboration of the GGA.

### *Loss and Damage*

On the issue of loss and damage, an important aspect is the operationalization of the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD) which is part of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage (WIM), for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change and to catalyze the technical assistance of relevant organizations, bodies, networks and experts for the implementation of relevant approaches at the local, national and regional level in developing countries.

Developing countries have submitted concrete proposals in relation to the functions of the Santiago network, but most of these have in draft text, are bracketed, due to opposition from developed countries, which, according to negotiators, inhibit the meaningful operationalization of the SNLD.

They have also been calls for the allocation of new, additional, public, concessional, predictable and transparent financial support for addressing loss and damage, in addition to adaptation and for adaptation and loss and damage to be treated separately.

However, there continues to be strong resistance from developed countries on financial support for loss and damage.

### *Pre-2020 ambition gap*

According to developing country negotiators, while there is much talk on the need for climate ambition

outside of the negotiating rooms, there is a strong reluctance by developed countries to acknowledge the gaps on mitigation and finance in the pre-2020 timeframe. Developed countries did not even want the report of the pre-2020 roundtable held last year to be listed in the Second Periodic Review decision, which is meant to assess the long-term global goal under the Convention and the means to achieve it.

### *Cover decision*

During the first week of the talks, the COP 26 Presidency has been convening informal consultations with heads of delegations on their views on what should be in the cover decisions of the COP, the CMP and the CMA.

According to sources, developed country groups and developing country sub-groups such as the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and the the Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC) gave a list of what they wanted to see in the cover decisions, referring to ‘science’, ‘ambition’, 1.5°C to be kept alive, revision of nationally determined contributions (NDCs), calls by youth and the role of non-state actors in the discussions. There were references to ‘major emitters’ and ‘G20 countries’ to revise their NDCs, align their NDCs and long-term strategies (LTS) to 1.5°C and explain if their NDCs and LTSs were not aligned to 1.5°C goal. There were calls for ‘ambition roundtables’ to be convened annually even. The focus was on closing the ‘pre-2030’ ambition gap, in line with science, with interventions reflecting the statement by the ‘Coalition of High Ambition’ made during the first week.

The LMDC, the Arab Group, the Africa Group and BASIC (Brazil, China, India and South Africa) stressed the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) and cautioned against introducing approaches and terms that departed from the Convention and the PA and which were not mandated by previous decisions.

According to sources further, the LMDC conveyed

to the COP Presidency that it is important to acknowledge the latest IPCC report on the 'Physical Science' which reaffirms that there is a linear relationship between cumulative emissions and rise in global surface temperature and that given the historical and cumulative emissions to date, more than 80% of the carbon budget for the 1.5°C temperature limit is already exhausted and global emissions databases show that developed countries have been responsible for over 60% of these past emissions. It stressed that this fact could not be ignored with a focus only future emissions, and behave as if all countries are equally responsible for the emissions gap that has resulted. It also noted with concern that developed

countries must achieve full decarbonisation within this decade, and not provide pledges of distant net zero targets by 2050, which is delays action and is anti-equity.

Following the responses from Parties, the COP Presidency has released a [non-paper](#) titled, 'Summary of possible elements identified by Parties for inclusion...' in the cover decisions under the COP, CMP and CMA.

The issue of the cover decisions is expected to be highly contentious and will be a key focus in the second and final week of the Glasgow talks.