

ADP: Contact group suspended, G77 and China to propose way forward

Lima, 11 Dec (Indrajit Bose) – As the contact group under the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform (ADP) for Enhanced Action convened in the morning of 11 December, the penultimate day of the Lima climate talks, the question hanging in the air was: what next?

There is deep divergence among Parties over differentiation and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the scope of the 2015 agreement, and the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs).

Parties went on till past midnight on 10 December giving textual proposals on the draft decision that had been prepared by the ADP Co-chairs for the Lima COP session. The initial version of the draft decision, which was 18 pages, is now about 60 pages, with numerous alternative proposals to paragraphs by Parties. These proposals are essentially the differences Parties have over issues.

(Several developing country delegates have said over the past few days that discussion of text on a screen with Parties inserting their proposals should have started at the earlier meetings of the ADP this year as demanded by many Parties. Instead, Parties are now pressured to conduct a Party-driven process in a less than a week.)

As ADP co-chair Artur Runge-Metzger (European Union) convened the ADP contact group on 11 December, he pointed to the areas of divergences and asked of Parties how they wanted the process to move ahead. At this point, the Group of 77 countries and China (G77 and China) pointed out that they are working on a proposal that would

provide more clarity about the next steps and how to move forward in the process.

Metzger asked of other Parties their views and since there were no comments by any other Party, the meeting was suspended until further notice. The meeting lasted less than 20 minutes.

Until the next contact group is announced, it is expected that Parties would be meeting in groups and building momentum on the way forward. Conversations in the corridor reflect the nervous anticipation over what will be the G77 and China's proposal. Some are also huddling in the corridors or in the make shift cafes at the venue and discussing how the next 48 hours will pan out. But above all, central to everyone's minds is how will the differences be resolved.

Some of differences include the scope of the 2015 agreement, the scope of the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs), when they should be submitted, whether they should be reviewed before Paris as well as arrangements under the pre-2020 track of the ADP, called Workstream 2.

A crucial area of divergence is differentiation, which cuts through all the areas of divergence. While the majority of developing countries want differentiation to be as per the binary division of annexes as agreed in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), developed countries say they cannot adhere to a binary structure and have proposed other forms of differentiation aimed at breaking the firewall between developed and developing countries.

(This fundamental shift in the Convention would change the balance of obligations and commitments in the Convention that is rooted in historical responsibility of developed countries that was accepted at the birth of the Convention, reflected in the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.)

During the high level ministerial dialogue on the ADP on 10 December, the European Union said it was willing to have the ADP Co-chairs produce a “clear and simple” text of the Lima decision. The EU also requested the COP President “as a final resort” to “step in and convey the very controversial

issues to ministers for resolution”. Switzerland supported a "streamlined" text by the Co-chairs. However, the majority of developing countries remain committed to an open, transparent and inclusive process given the severity of the decision and its implications for the 2015 agreement.

The ADP is officially supposed to close on 11 December and forward the draft decision for adoption to the Conference of Parties, which is scheduled to end on 12 December. However, it is expected that as happened with previous COP sessions, Lima talks too might stretch into overtime. No one is sure until when.