

Climate talks open on grim and sombre note

Warsaw, 12 Nov (Meena Raman and Zhenyan Zhu) - The climate talks under the UNFCCC opened on Monday, 11 Nov in Warsaw, Poland on a grim and sombre note, as Parties recalled the devastation of super typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

The Philippines head of delegation, Naradev Sano made an impassioned and emotional plea, calling for the Warsaw talks to “end the madness” breaking down at the end of his speech. Sano announced that he was commencing a voluntary fast until meaningful progress has been made in Warsaw.

Sano said that typhoon Haiyan was apparently the cruelest and worst storm in recorded history, with the full extent of the damage being uncertain. “The picture following its aftermath is of a colossal disaster.” He said that Parties cannot afford to delay climate action and that “we can stop this madness”. Sano said that this was the 19th meeting of the Conference of Parties and despite significant gains, “we continue to fall short of attaining the Convention’s ultimate objective. Loss and damage is a reality and developed country mitigation targets are dangerously low. Parties were at a critical juncture and even with the most ambitious reductions, it is too late and there is need for global solidarity. The means of implementation is ever so crucial and the emerging climate pathway cannot be that typhoons are a way of life as is the counting of dead bodies.” Sano said that the Philippines are doing their own efforts with a national renewable energy programme and that if the developed world could finance the incremental costs, it could do much more in mitigation actions.

He said his own family’s hometown was hit by Haiyan, adding that his brother survived but is hungry and weary as food supplies are short, and is involved in burying dead bodies. Sano

announced that he would adopt a ‘voluntary fast’ during this COP until there was a “meaningful outcome”. He wanted concrete resources to be mobilized for the Green Climate Fund (GCF) which remains an empty shell and needed to see real ambition. He said the UNFCCC could be called “a project to save the world and we could stop the madness” and urged Parties not to move the ‘goal post’. He ended his speech with a call to Parties to rise above humanity and received a standing ovation as he broke down in tears.

Parties then observed a 3 minute silence for those who had perished in the tragedy, on the request of Su Wei, the head of the Chinese delegation to the COP 19 Presidency, Marcin Korolec, Minister of Environment of Poland.

The COP 19 and the 9th session of the meeting of Parties of the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 9) are meeting from 11- 22nd Nov. The subsidiary bodies who are also meeting are the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP). The SBI and SBSTA also opened on Monday, 11 Nov, while the ADP will begin on 12 Nov.

There were concerns whether the COP provisional agenda would be adopted, given that the Russian Federation had proposed a new sub-item for inclusion on ‘decision making in the UNFCCC process’ under the agenda item on ‘Administrative, financial and institutional matters.’ When a similar proposal to include a new agenda item was made by the Russian Federation, Belarus and Ukraine for the SBI session in June in Bonn, Germany, the SBI could not commence work at all, due to wrangling over the agenda.

However, in Warsaw, the COP opening did not see an ‘agenda fight’ as Parties were given an assurance by the COP 19 President that the Russian proposal would not duplicate other agenda items on the ‘adoption of the rules of procedure’ [item 2(b) of the provisional agenda and item 6 (b) relating to a proposal by Papua New Guinea and Mexico for amendments to the Convention to allow for a right to vote on all matters, except those related to financial rules and the financial mechanism when consensus cannot be found among Parties.]

Papua New Guinea, following the adoption of the agenda said that it had made requests since the Bali COP for adoption of the rules of procedure (which is still pending adoption as Parties have not been able to agree on rule 42 on ‘voting’ when consensus is not possible). It said that without having effective and transparent processes, the hands of Parties were being tied. It wanted resolution of this.

When Parties were invited to make statements following the adoption of the agenda, the G77 and China stressed that the Warsaw talks must be about the implementation of past commitments including on finance, technology transfer, capacity building, adaptation and a mechanism to address loss and damage. The G77 and China call was echoed by all the other developing country groupings.

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COP 19 opening

Fiji, speaking for **G77 and China** viewed COP 19 as “an implementation COP”, implementing the decisions adopted by Parties from Bali to Doha. It identified some areas of priority for the group which included issues relating to finance,

technology transfer, capacity-building, adaptation, a mechanism for addressing loss and damage and response measures. It wanted good outcomes on matters related to finance, stressing that the Green Climate Fund (GCF) remains an empty shell.

Nicaragua, speaking for the **Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** said that under the Convention, equity and common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) lie at the core of efforts to increase ambition. It is heartening to note that, even while CBDR is questioned by some in the UNFCCC, just recently the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Assembly agreed to include this principle on par with other ICAO principles. Parties must go beyond platitudes about the urgency of action. Developing countries have done so and have pledged greater emission reductions for 2020 than the developed countries. Concrete action is now required, particularly from those Parties who are historically responsible for creating the problem and who, owing to this historical responsibility, have long been committed to take the lead but have so far fallen short.

For the LMDC, concrete action includes having COP decisions in relation to the work of the ADP and the subsidiary bodies under which developed countries: (1) show that they are finally taking the lead through scaled-up concrete actions to cut their emissions; and (2) commit in concrete operational terms to provide substantial and tangible funding and technologies to developing countries through the bodies that have been set up under the Convention and the Bali Action Plan. These in turn lay the basis of strengthening the mutual trust among Parties and for further enhancing the ability of developing countries to contribute to the global effort against climate change under the Convention in the context of their sustainable development.

It called on all Parties to ensure that the Doha outcomes agreed under the Bali Road Map and Durban Platform are fully implemented so that work under the ADP can advance and there must have real progress on: The immediate and early ratification of the Kyoto Protocol amendment for its second commitment period by Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol; Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol unconditionally increasing in 2014 their mitigation targets, together with comparable increases in mitigation targets of those Annex I

Parties who are not under the Kyoto Protocol, to at least 40% to 50% below 1990 levels by 2020; the rapid and substantial capitalization and operationalization of the GCF; Annex II Parties having clear commitments with an agreed pathway to providing new, additional, and sufficient public climate finance pre-2020 through the Convention's financial mechanism with a measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) system for support; the operationalization of the loss and damage mechanism; the prioritizing and improving support for adaptation and economic diversification to build resilience in developing countries; effectively addressing the economic and social consequences of response measures consistent with the Convention; addressing forest activities, including through non-market mechanisms; progress towards having operational modalities through the work of the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) to ensure accelerated technology transfer to developing countries, including addressing the issue of intellectual property rights; progress on enhancing capability building for developing countries.

In the Durban Platform, there must be balanced, comprehensive, and equitable treatment of all the elements for the outcome as identified in paragraph 5 of decision 1/CP.17 in a more focused, organized and formal mode of work on enhancing the four pillars of the Convention. This must be complemented by progress in the implementation of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol based on all previous COP and CMP decisions. The ADP package is not about mitigation alone. Adaptation and economic diversification to build resilience in developing countries in the context of sustainable development are main priorities for developing countries. Both mitigation and adaptation require the provision of the means of implementation under the Convention. All of these elements are interlinked, they must be in the same instrument with the same legal nature, and they must be treated in a balanced, comprehensive, and symmetrical manner on the basis of equity and in accordance with our common but differentiated responsibilities. Urgently addressing the implementation gaps is necessary for eliminating the ambition gap pre- and post-2020 and promoting equitable access to sustainable development, guided by the principles of the

Convention. In addition, focusing on new issues such as new market mechanisms and other attempts at designing new regimes or new concepts that are not consistent with the Convention must be avoided.

China on behalf of **BASIC countries (Brazil, India, South Africa and China)** urged developed countries to undertake ambitious quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets and fulfill their commitments of providing finance and technology support to developing countries, during both the pre-2020 and post-2020 periods. The Warsaw Conference should advance the implementation of commitments already made; it should also make concrete progress on the development of the 2015 agreement. The need for adaptation is more real and urgent to developing countries. It noted with concerns the increasing adaptation needs, the associated costs and the implications for the sustainable development of developing countries as well as the low level of funding for developing countries' adaptation actions. It urged developed countries to provide finance, technology and capacity-building support to developing countries' adaptation actions.

China also emphasized that finance is the key to the success of the Warsaw Conference and urge developed countries to honour their obligations to provide new, additional and adequate financial support to developing countries in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner, with firm and secured commitments of funding for the period from 2013 to 2020 and a clear roadmap to reach the goal of providing US \$100 billion per year by 2020. It further urged developed countries to put forward the detailed numbers of their financial support to developing countries for the period from 2013 to 2020 in Warsaw. The level of financial support for this period should be greater than that provided as the fast-start finance to enable developing countries to lower the carbon intensity of their development and to become climate resilient societies. The public financial resources should be the main source of such funding while financing from the private sector could only be supplementary.

It also called for the full operationalization of institutions established in the Bali process. It also wanted issues of IPR and unilateral measures to be addressed. It reiterated strong objections to any unilateral measures regarding emissions from international civil aviation and other sectors.

Nauru, for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** said developing countries needed assistance and those who are most response must commit to safeguarding the climate system to protect most vulnerable. There is need to limit warming to well below 1.5 degree C and the COP should be about urgency of action. If emissions do not peak and close the gap in emission pledges, this could trigger a cascade of tragic events. It called for robust financing and the USD100 billion per year by 2020 to fund adaptation and mitigation. It wanted the GCF to be capitalized and for the establishment of an international mechanism for loss and damage.

Nepal speaking for the **LDCs** highlighted the importance of the loss and damage mechanism and wanted further progress on adaptation related matters. It also stressed the importance of financing with a clear roadmap for the USD 100 billion per year by 2020.

Panama for the countries in the **Central American Integration System (SICA)** said the region is one of the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and called for a mechanism on loss and damage to be established.

Cuba for the **ALBA countries** also echoed similar comments as other developing countries and stressed the importance of financing from public sources as a priority for developing countries. It also did not want the promotion of market mechanisms under the Convention.

Lithuania, speaking for the **European Union** underlined that mitigation, adaptation and finance were important. It referred to the latest United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Emissions Gap Report that in 2020, even if all the emissions reduction pledges by various countries are implemented, there would be an emissions gap of 8-12 GgtCO₂ equivalent per year for limiting a 2 degree Celsius goal. It wanted all Parties to take action on mitigation pledges in 2014. On loss and damage, it expressed commitment for a productive outcome. It also wanted progress climate finance, adaptation and market mechanisms.

Australia, for the **Umbrella Group**, stressed the importance of working towards a new agreement (under the ADP), applicable to all Parties for enhancing collective mitigation ambition. It said that countries are acting on a range of domestic

actions but this was far from sufficient and called for accelerated international arrangements.

Switzerland for the **Environmental Integrity Group** said that the international regime up to 2020 must be strengthened with all Parties implementing their pledges fully, operationalization and capitalization of the GCF, and for the establishment of a common system for the transfer of units (in relation to emissions trading). It wanted a dynamic and legally binding post 2020 agreement with robust rules.

At the opening ceremony

At the opening ceremony, **Marcin Korolec**, the COP 19 President, said that climate change is a global issue and one country or even a group cannot make a difference but acting together, united, "we can do it". He said there is always something each Party brings to the table and everyone can "offer one ingredient of the medicine that we will all make to cure our planet". He promised that in Warsaw and over the next 12 months, he will spare no effort to find a consensus. "This is a Party driven process, but it needs a facilitator" and promised a transparent and inclusive process. These, he said are his top priorities to create the conditions to help to lay solid foundations for the new agreement.

The Executive Secretary of UNFCCC, **Christiana Figueres** pointed to the sobering realities of climate change and the rise in extreme events that climate science has long predicted, including the devastating typhoon Haiyan. She highlighted the key areas in which COP 19 can make progress. She said we must clarify finance that enables the entire world to move towards low-carbon development; we must launch the construction of a mechanism that helps vulnerable populations to respond to the unanticipated effects of climate change; and we must deliver an effective path to pre-2020 ambition and develop further clarify for elements of the new agreement that will shape the post-2020 global climate, economic and development agendas.

The Chairman of the IPCC, Dr. Pachauri delivered a presentation on the 'Conclusions of the IPCC Working Group I Fifth Assessment Report'.