

Post-COP24 Press statement

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Deal Secured but Ambitions Lowered in Katowice

“The Paris Rulebook finalised in Katowice last week is another stepping stone towards genuine collective action on climate change. However, it falls short of raising ambitions, weakens responsibilities of historic emitters and ignores the pressing need of immediate climate action. Moreover, COP24 has failed to maintain adequate balance between action and support,” said Dr Arunabha Ghosh, CEO, Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), at the end of climate negotiations in Katowice, Poland.

Below, we compare The Council’s Pre-COP expectations to final outcomes achieved at Katowice.

Climate science heard but not recognised at Katowice

Pre-negotiations, The Council highlighted that science must guide collective action on the basis of equity at COP24. Unfortunately, the findings of the IPCC special 1.5C report were dismissed by a few countries in Katowice and the final text of the Rulebook failed to mention the urgency for climate action raised by the report. “We must not ignore the science and equity-based budgeting of remaining carbon space to raise climate ambitions. The draft text must make greater room for scientific knowledge coming from IPCC assessments. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) has a major responsibility to drive science-backed climate action,” said Ghosh.

Progress made on capacity; equity and differentiated responsibility missing from transparency framework

The Council had highlighted that the Paris Agreement Rulebook must support building capacity for transparency and ex-ante reporting on climate finance. Post COP24, we are still far from finding an adequate balance between transparency of action and support mechanisms. “There is intensified reporting and accounting of mitigation and GHG emissions by all the Parties, which is a significant step up for the obligations of developing countries. However, provisions related to climate finance remain weaker. Although developed countries have agreed to ex-ante reporting of climate finance, the specific contents of reporting remain soft obligations. Moreover, the guiding principles of equity and differentiated responsibility are missing from the modalities, procedures and guidelines of the enhanced transparency framework,” Ghosh said. Even if equity and differentiation (as CBDR) find due mention in the draft decision at other places, such as matters related to implementation of the Paris agreement, omission of these guiding principles from the transparency text creates doubt. Currently, it binds together all the reporting around NDCs (Article 4), adaptation actions (article 7), support (Article 9,10,11), and global stocktake (article 14).

“We may have found a balanced text through, but it is not sustainable in the longer run. Ideally, self-determined capacity improvement plans should have been linked to ex-ante finance commitments under a common review and stocktake mechanism,” Ghosh added.

Developing countries miss out on new and additional climate finance

The Council had reiterated that a strong Paris Rulebook would ensure that access to finance became more just, equitable and differentiated. However, the finalised text weakens access to climate finance for developing countries by treating all funding sources (including official development

assistance) and financial instruments (grants, concessional loans, non-concessional loans, equity, guarantee, insurance, etc.) identically. “In this arrangement, the developing countries can no more question the unjust, inequitable, and undifferentiated nature of funds treated as climate finance by the developed countries. We have ended up legitimising the fundamental flaws connected with climate finance,” Ghosh said. “In view of recent developments, fit-for-purpose financial products are more than just a need to create, test and deploy financial solutions in advance the energy transitions in emerging economies. They would be pivotal for developing countries to meet their NDCs,” Ghosh added. In addition, the Parties have to work harder on unresolved matters pertaining to Article 6, which would be critical to send the right signals to innovators and markets.

Non-Party actors important for meeting the Paris dream

The Council had recommended recognising actors, initiatives and institutions to strengthen collective action. Non-party actors, including a vibrant civil society, played a crucial role in supporting countries to reach a deal around the Rulebook in Paris. Their role needs to be significantly enhanced to meet the Paris climate commitments. “We need to establish a bigger role of non-Party actors towards capacity building, prioritising needs, improving data and reporting, and scaling up potential initiatives at a global level. The technology framework guidelines in the new text formally support collaboration and engagement with non-Party stakeholders. This is a positive start and will bring greater innovation and impetus to the implementation process,” Ghosh emphasised.

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