

More work required to seek balanced outcomes in Egypt

Bonn, 20 June (Hilary Kung and Meena Raman) - The UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) concluded their 56th session meetings (SB 56) on June 16 to arrive at conclusions on various matters in the run up to COP 27 (which will take place in November this year in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt). The SB meetings began in Bonn, Germany on June 6.

Developing countries, led by the **G77 and China** expressed regret that the SB 56 session did not see balance across all issues, with loss and damage-related issues being stymied. Many developing country groupings also expressed disappointment at the lack of concrete progress on issues of loss and damage, adaptation and means of implementation.

Ambassador Wael Aboul Magd of Egypt, representing the incoming **COP27 Presidency** noted that "some progress has been made on several agenda items, yet others continue to be affected by divergent views, and hence will require more intersessional work to ensure that the work in Sharm El Sheikh will start from the most advanced point possible," (in terms of negotiations on the issues).

The SBI's closing plenary was first convened by its Chair, **Marianne Karlsen (Norway)**, in

the afternoon of June 6, followed by the closing plenary meeting of the SBSTA convened by its Chair, **Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu (Democratic Republic of Congo)**. These plenaries were followed by a joint session of the SBs, on matters relating to both bodies, and also to hear closing statements from groups and Parties.

In the morning of June 16 prior to the closing plenary sessions of the SBs, informal consultations with Heads of Delegations (HOS) were convened by the SB Chairs to finalise matters relating to the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation (GGA) and the mitigation work programme (MWP). According to sources, developing countries wanted the decisions reached to ensure that work progressed in a balanced manner between adaptation and mitigation. The developed countries were more concerned about the MWP compared to the GGA work programme. Once the conclusions on the GGA were finalised at the HODs, agreement on the way forward on the MWP was reached.

As regards the proposal by the **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** which was supported by the **G77 and China** for an additional agenda item on the Glasgow dialogue on loss and damage (GD), SBI Chair Karlsen at the official plenary session reported that informal consultations among Parties did not lead to any

consensus on the matter. According to sources, this was due to the opposition of developed countries to this proposal, especially from the **United States**.

(Further details on these matters above and also on other agenda items will follow in further updates).

Following the interventions by groups of Parties and countries at the final joint-plenary session, **Ambassador Magd (Egypt)** also said that he had yet to see the political will and readiness to compromise at the technical level. While respecting the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) between developed and developing countries, he urged Parties to find ways to ensure that appropriate means of implementation particularly climate finance is available and accessible to support developing countries as they strive to contribute to this global effort while pursuing their legitimate aspirations for sustainable development and elimination of poverty. He also called for progress towards addressing the issue of loss and damage in a manner which meets the needs of countries and communities who continue to suffer the consequences of climate change.

Magd also said that we should refrain from dealing with the climate challenge as a zero-sum equation where it is either north versus south, or mitigation versus adaptation, or governmental versus non-governmental, adding that “at a time when we are facing multiple global challenges ranging from a post pandemic economic slowdown to a geopolitical situation with impacts on energy and food prices to a persistent debt crisis in many countries The issue of climate change must be the area where we commit to working together and where we demonstrate unity against this existential threat and show leadership as we move forward to address it.” He stressed that “now is the time for implementation.”

Closing interventions

Pakistan, speaking for the **G77 and China**, said that it had emphasised the importance of balanced progress across all issues, including adaptation, mitigation, means of implementation and loss and damage, and added that it was regrettable that it did not see

the balance and that discussions on loss and damage related issues remained stymied.

It said further that the G77 had put forward practical and pragmatic proposals to strengthen the institutional and funding architecture to effectively address loss and damage and yet, there was no agreement on the institutional structure and operational modalities needed to catalyse technical assistance through the Santiago Network on loss and damage (SNLD). On the proposed additional agenda item on the GD, it expressed dissatisfaction with the way this issue was handled.

Adaptation remains a key priority for the group, said Pakistan, while finance remains the cornerstone for ensuring successful and effective implementation of the Convention and its Paris Agreement (PA). Provision of financial and technical support to developing countries for reporting must be adequate and predictable, it added further. In relation to the work program on the new collective quantified goal (NCQG) on finance, it stressed the need for guaranteeing concrete, in-depth discussions on its main elements in a timely manner. The debate on the ‘quantum’ of the NCQG is a priority, said the G77.

It also stressed the great values of the Adaptation Fund (AF) as an effective tool for the developing countries due to its unique nature and legal standing, adding that it is the only fund dedicated to concrete adaptation efforts through full cost grants.

On technology development and transfer, it called on developed countries to support the implementation of the Convention and the PA by strengthening the Technology Mechanism and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), in particular through the provision of adequate financial resources. It also stressed that for the future sessions of technical dialogue under global stocktake (GST), more voices from the global South should be invited.

Bolivia on behalf of the **LMDC** expressed its disappointment that the proposal for an agenda item on the GD was not agreed to, and that the rich discussions from the GD workshops could not be reflected in any (party-driven) formal outcomes. It stated the world expects more out of Parties, and

not just the organisation of dialogues, roundtables and discussions. “We need to translate the discussions into outcomes we can implement and make a difference in the lives of people who are suffering the consequence of a crisis they have not caused”, said Bolivia further, and requested developed countries to not pay lip service to issues of adaptation, loss and damage and means of implementation.

It also warned against any attempt from Parties to renegotiate the Convention and the PA (in reference to concepts introduced in the MWP discussions). It said that such attempts portend a difficult COP 27 and added that the LMDC will not compromise on the principles of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) and climate justice, stressing that “these form the bedrock of climate action.” It also said that it had reiterated the importance of balanced progress on all issues, but often found “ourselves to be not on a level playing field because issues important to us are not reflected either in the agendas or they fall through the cracks during the discussions.” It appealed to the SB Chairs and the incoming COP 27 Presidency to restore balance in the process, adding that adaptation, loss and damage and the means of implementation are very key areas for developing countries and hoped for meaningful progress in these areas, including in mitigation, in Sharm el Sheikh.

Zambia on behalf of the **African Group** registered disappointment that consensus could not be reached on the agenda item on the GD and stressed the importance of advancing work on clarifying financing arrangements for loss and damage. Likewise, for the SNLD, it was disappointed with lack of willingness to engage on this item, and hoped for agreement on its operationalization at COP27. On finance, it said that African countries urgently require the means to implement their ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and are concerned about the lack of focus under the work programme for the NCQG. On the GST, it requested dedicated sessions at the next round of the technical dialogues on cross-cutting issues and linkages, including equity and support and called for a comprehensive aggregate assessment that will help assess ways to collectively meet the goals of the PA and fully implement it with the enabling support, in the context of sustainable devel-

opment and on the basis of CBDR-RC, equity and best available science.

Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** registered its disappointment by the lack of substantive progress in critical areas. It said that considering the big picture, there have been no more assurances that the finance needed now will be delivered at scale or speed. It called on developed countries to double adaptation finance pledges before Sharm el Sheikh, adding that the process felt out of step with reality and the pace was too slow. It added that the first GD saw rich conversations, but this is too little, too late. “We are here to negotiate; not to educate” it stressed and that “loss and damage is being written out of our tracks” and that “science must be the basis of our decisions here, yet we leave with disappointing conclusions.” It expressed further that “this is an unconscionable way to negotiate with vulnerable countries.”

Senegal on behalf of **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** also expressed its disappointment that SB56 was not able to advance the work on many fronts in line with its high expectations and stated that “the outcomes are underwhelming”. It expected COP 27 to substantively advance work on the MWP to urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation, the GGA, financing for loss and damage and operationalization of the SNLD, and many other finance related agenda items, including on improved access.

India on behalf of **Brazil, South Africa, India and China (BASIC)** said that BASIC countries have exhibited leadership in coming forward with ambitious NDCs and announcements that go beyond their fair share contribution. It said that they now have ambitious targets to implement, but there is poor progress on the means of implementation. It called for urgent progress on means of implementation, particularly on climate finance and technology, to accelerate our actions in this critical decade, adding that the upcoming COP should focus on delivering finance, technology, and capacity-building support as the key enablers of implementation. It said that the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) also observed a lack

of progress in adaptation as well as climate finance. It said that there are critical gaps in adaptation actions and climate finance support to developing countries from developed countries and that the experience so far with the climate finance delivery is a stark reminder to all of us that the ambitions will not yield results unless they are converted into actions. It also echoed the call for a greater balance by devoting more time to securing information and discussion on priority concerns of developing countries, including on linkages and cross-cutting issues such as equity and support.

Chile for the **Independent Alliance of Latin America and Caribbean countries (AILAC)** said that during the first technical dialogue of the GST, it heard the experts from the IPCC assert that “there is sufficient global capital and liquidity to close global investment gaps to (limit temperature rise) 1.5°C”. It said that “the failure to meet the goal of USD100 billion has never been a problem of money” and called for “the mobilisation of financial resources from all sources.” It said that calling for loss and damage finance is a reality for which there must be an answer. It also called for a concrete result from the adaptation agenda.

Brazil for **Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay (ABU)** said that this session has shown that developing countries will face serious difficulties, due to the lack of interest of some Parties in delivering equally ambitious goals for adaptation, loss and damage and means of implementation. On climate finance, the success of COP 27 “will be measured by our capacity to deliver on means of implementation”, it added. It said further “that the GST highlighted the importance to address not only the progress achieved in capacity-building, technology, and finance but most importantly providing us with relevant information on how to overcome the challenges faced by developing countries”.

It also called for urgent progress on the NCQG on climate finance by setting a clear roadmap. It said that to have successful implementation, we must advance in bringing adaptation, loss and damage and means of implementation to

the same level ambition of mitigation, adding that Parties have different starting points in regard to implementation, and we cannot go on with if we overlook this fact. The PA explicitly establishes that implementation is to reflect equity and the principle of CBDR, said Brazil further.

Venezuela for the **Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America (ALBA)** recalled that the PA is legally binding instrument that must be upheld; it cannot be eroded from the commitments Parties made. It reiterated the principle of CBDR and the importance of the non-market approaches under Article 6.8 (of the PA).

Saudi Arabia on behalf of **Arab Group** stated that achieving the GGA is an important enabler to achieve the full implementation of the PA. On mitigation, it hoped that the MWP will complement the GST, while respecting the CBDR principle. On the GST, it called for balance with regards to the means of implementation, adaptation and mitigation.

Papua New Guinea for the **Coalition for Rainforests Nations** said that “Transitioning to renewable energy will not be enough, and we need the land use sector, in particular forests, to achieve net zero by 2050.” It further stated that, the Article 6 mechanisms (of the PA) should contribute to net zero and reward developing countries’ actions to reverse deforestation and enhance carbon stocks. It also outlined its expectations on Article 6.2 and 6.4 where the Article 6.2 review should not duplicate any assessment already undertaken under Article 5 (on forests) and any new process agreed under Article 6.4.

European Union admitted that there was uneven progress. On mitigation, it said that we are guided by the Glasgow Climate Pact and the real urgency of scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade. It had hoped that all Parties shared this same sense of urgency ‘to ensure that the MWP contributes the success of COP 27. It said that “despite all efforts, we were not able to formally acknowledge the work from our discussions here,

but we look forward to sharing our views and engaging constructively at the workshop in Sharm to deliver the progress that the world expects.”

Australia for the **Umbrella Group** welcomed the exchange on the MWP and also stated its disappointment that some have blocked the capturing of the rich discussion at this session. It said that COP 27 must deliver an outcome that spurs on greater mitigation ambition and effective implementation in this critical decade to keep 1.5 degree Celsius alive. (Umbrella Group refers to Australia, Canada, Iceland, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Kazakhstan, Norway, Ukraine and the United States. Russia and Belarus used to be members of the Umbrella Group until March 2022)

Switzerland for **Environmental Integrity Group** said that losing the 1.5- degree C limit must not be an option, adding that progress was not sufficient. “If we continue to work like that, we will neither deliver on the MWP, nor on the clear mandate to operationalize the SNLD, a tool developed to deliver quick technical assistance to address increasing urgency.”

SBI closing plenary

During the SBI closing plenary, following the adoption of conclusions on the various agenda items, Parties made interventions on three matters.

Pakistan on behalf of **G77 and China** registered its serious concerns over the lack of substantive outcome at SB 56 on financing the formulation and implementation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** commented that the

SBI plenary was conducted in a rapid pace and requested the SBI Chair under her own authority to provide a report that captured the fruitful exchange of discussions on the GD, and also wanted the full video of session in this regard to be uploaded. Karlsen noted the request and said that she would be in contact with the secretariat on the matter.

SBSTA closing plenary

During the SBSTA closing plenary, on the agenda item on “Matters related to science and review”, India delivered a strong intervention that it was disappointed that the draft conclusions are unable to note the most significant advances of the three Working Group Reports of the IPCC that have provided through the concept of global carbon budgets - a foundational view of past, present, and future responsibility (of Parties). Fair access to the global carbon budget should be the basis for the operationalization of equity, said **India**.

It added further that there are many scenarios and mitigation pathways in the scientific literature, but most of them are not based on equity nor are the regional assumptions explained. “There is much work to do, and yet we have not thought it fit to reach a conclusion on these questions and accept them even as research questions”, said India, adding that “the conclusions do not capture the discussion of these issues in several other meeting rooms and processes including the Second Periodic Review and the Technical Dialogues (under the global stocktakes). Selective picking of the facts from the reports will not help us to move positively and fairly in the UNFCCC process. We urge that colleagues be more open-minded on discussions of what is well-accepted in the scientific literature,” stressed India further.