



# TWN

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## From Baku to Belém: Multilateralism under pressure

Penang, 3 July (S.Hui): “If you think 2024 was very hostile and difficult for developing countries in the climate negotiations, this year appears even more hostile and difficult for developing countries. It appears as if multilateralism is (a patient) in the intensive care unit in the UNFCCC and is on-drips!” remarked Meena Raman, the Head of Programmes of Third World Network (TWN), in setting the scene of the climate talks at a side event organised by the TWN together with the Plurinational State of Bolivia, on the opening day of the Bonn sessions on 16 June 2025.

**Raman** was moderating the side event on the theme of ‘An assessment of the Baku outcomes and challenges on the road to Belem’, with speakers on the panel who were **Khaled Hashem of Egypt**, the G77 coordinator for the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP), **Vicente Yu** from the **Philippines**, the G77 and China coordinator on the global stocktake (GST), and **Abdulaziz Abdullah Albutti** of **Saudi Arabia** who leads the adaptation negotiations for the Arab Group.

Raman set the scene further, elaborating that multilateralism seemed to be eroding, against the backdrop of the climate emergency, which was further challenged by the broader geopolitical environment, the rise of unilateral and

protectionist policies including the tariff war set off by the Trump administration and the on-going genocide in Palestine, including the rise of carbon emissions from war and military operations. She also reflected on the weak outcome from Baku on the new collective quantified goal on finance, which led to the proposal by the G77 and China, for a new agenda item at the Bonn session for consideration by the UNFCCC’s Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) on implementation of Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement (PA) (which deals with the mandatory obligations of developed countries to provide finance to developing countries for mitigation and adaptation).

She also drew attention to the long letter issued to Parties by the incoming COP 30 Brazilian Presidency which “was rather unprecedented” and is “telling the world that we are at a time which is very difficult, but we need to ensure that multilateralism continues.”

The panel of developing country negotiators shared views on their expectations and discussed how multilateralism and international cooperation should look like in real terms in the UNFCCC.

**TWN**  
Third World Network

Third World Network is an independent non-profit international research and advocacy organization involved in bringing about a greater articulation of the needs, aspirations and rights of the peoples in the South and in promoting just, equitable and ecological development.  
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## ***COP 30 as Adaptation COP***

**Albutti** said that a key challenge within the climate negotiation process is to connect the discussions with real-world conditions. Too often, the process overlooks the urgent economic and developmental realities faced by countries, especially in the context of escalating climate impacts. “We cannot just speak about emission reductions without ensuring that we have an adaptive capacity in a 1.5-degree Celsius temperature (rise) world.” He asked further if countries, ecosystems, and communities prepared to adapt live and thrive in a 1.5°C world. “This is the question we need to ask ourselves,” said Albutti. For many developing nations, the answer is no. These countries face existential challenges from even a single flood, volcanic eruption, or climate-related disaster. Adaptation is not optional; it’s a matter of survival and resilience, explained Albutti.

Elaborating further, he said, despite this, adaptation finance remains grossly insufficient. In 2021–2023,—adaptation finance did not even exceed US\$28 billion. Estimates indicate they require at least US\$380 billion annually just to respond to climate impacts, not to mention the much larger sums needed to build resilience and adaptive capacity.

In the negotiations, developed countries would not allow having anything in the decision text that reinforce their commitments to provide means of implementation (MOI), leaving developing countries without the resources and means they need, including for the implementation of their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), said Albutti further.

He said, now, with the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) at the centre of the agenda, countries, including the Arab Group and others, are calling for COP30 to be the “Adaptation COP”. Albutti explained further that under the GGA in Dubai, the ‘UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience’ has seven thematic and four-dimensional targets. The GGA thematic targets cover water, food and agriculture, health, ecosystems and biodiversity, infrastructure and human settlements, poverty eradication and livelihoods and protection of cultural heritage, while the dimensional targets are (i) impact, vulnerability and risk assessment, (ii)

planning, (iii) implementation and (iv) monitoring, evaluation and learning. The achievement of these targets depends on the delivery of the MOI.”

The Arab Group representative said that the GGA delivers real ambition in addressing adaptation, aligned with the needs, responsibilities, and commitments that have been made since 1992 in UNFCCC, and reaffirmed in 2015 under the PA. The time to act on that ambition is now. The focus should be on the global progress on adaptation, on the gaps and needs, and a clear way forward for adaptation over the coming years, as well as the delivery of MOI.

The scientific literature, including IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) reports, confirms that we are on track for an overshoot of the 1.5°C threshold. Given this reality, adaptation is no longer optional; economies, societies, and ecosystems must be prepared now to withstand the impacts of climate change. Developing countries, who have contributed the least to climate change but are experiencing its worst impacts, must be supported. This will only be possible with strong political will and the financial and technical support needed to enable all developing countries to move together, stressed Albutti further.

## ***Call for new institutional arrangement for Just Transitions at COP30***

**Khaled Hashem** said “while COP27 (in 2022) is largely remembered for launching the Loss and Damage Fund, it also laid the foundational ground for the establishment of the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP). Being part of the COP 27 Presidency, Hashem remarked that he saw a lot of resemblance with the upcoming COP30 Presidency with regards to the emphasis on ‘implementation’ (of commitments).

He said further that “the JTWP is meant to enhance implementation of the PA, whether mitigation, adaptation or any other relevant implementation. The concept of ‘just transition’ is broad and has significantly evolved over the past year, moving from a nascent idea to a more structured and solid concept among Parties in the negotiations.”

He further explained that “the three dialogues under JTWP did help solidify the broader perspective of just transitions, which also include development perspectives. The most recent dialogue also reaffirmed that adaptation must be a central pillar of any just transitions.” Hashem acknowledged that importance of the contributions and participation of civil society organisations’ in the JTWP and also stressed that indigenous people and local communities, who often face the brunt of climate impacts, have a lot of community-based and indigenous people-led solutions and initiatives which should be supported in just transitions.

He explained that at COP29 however, no decision was reached on the JTWP. Looking ahead to COP30, he said, “there is growing momentum to institutionalise the knowledge and experiences from these dialogues, potentially through a permanent arrangement that ensures continuity beyond the programme’s initial two-year timeframe. This is because the Dubai decision stated that the effectiveness and efficiency of the JTWP will be reviewed and its continuation will be considered in 2026. The hope is that there will be adequate institutional arrangement to enhance the operationalisation of the work programme, be it a knowledge platform or hub.”

Explaining further, Hashem said, for developing countries, it is important to keep “just transitions” in plural because there are many just transition pathways and no one size fits all. There are also national and international dimensions or perspectives in just transitions, and the emphasis should be on multilateralism and international cooperation being the fundamental enablers for developing countries to pursue their just transition strategies.

Further, Hashem said “there is a need for a structural paradigm shift on development, on how sustainable development can be achieved in the near future when we are expecting overshoot of the temperature goal.”

### ***Technology Implementation Programme***

**Vicente Yu** said as developing countries were preparing for the GST in 2022, one of the big conversations they had was the fact that even

though finance is key in the MOI, so too is technology. “If you look at the way that technology transfer and development has been dealt with in the UNFCCC regime, it has become one of those topics which had gotten sidelined into just a conversation about institutions, rather than a conversation about the actual delivery of this particular MOI through developing countries,” said Yu further.

According to Yu, “when it comes to technology transfer and development, the G77 and China always recalls Article 4.5 of the Convention. There are two main things in Article 4.5 – first, is an obligation by developed countries to take practical steps including (in providing finance); while second, is about enablement and facilitation of the access and transfer of technologies to support developing countries in implementing their commitments. Often people forget that there is a second part to that particular obligation, that technology transfer is supposed to also help developing countries develop their own technologies for purposes of sustainable development and climate change,” said Yu further.

“Assessments regarding the implementation of Article 4.5 of the UNFCCC and Article 10 of the PA (on technology), consistently conclude that the current approach has failed to deliver meaningful results. For instance, the Expert Group on Technology Transfer, in a 2005 report reflecting on two decades of efforts, noted that technology transfer under the regime had been largely limited to completed projects, without any real, tangible technology transfer occurring on the ground”.

Elaborating further, he said, “As developing countries going to the GST, one of the things that we thought about was we needed to move the conversation on technology transfer away from talking about how do we improve, for example, the Climate Technology Center and Network and how do we get more funding into these institutions, to how do we tweak the work of the technology sector and community into actually thinking about what can we do to actually improve technology transfer in real terms that would move technology from developed countries to developing countries. And this was shaped by several things which came out from studies and analysis.”

Yu said further that “despite the significant advances by some developing countries such as China, in their renewable energy area, 80 to 85 percent of climate-related technology patents are still owned and controlled by corporations based in the global North. Of the total trade of climate-related technologies exported all over the world, about 75 percent of that are still done by countries from the global North.”

Yu explained that “technology development is not happening in most developing countries, except in some; and most developing countries are getting left behind. There have been studies produced by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), for example, that show that the overall frontier of technology, developed countries are gaining lion share. This is the background of why the GST has a paragraph that says, ‘Decides to establish a Technology Implementation Programme (TIP), supported by the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, to strengthen support for the implementation of technology priorities identified by developing

countries...”

Yu explained further that the G77 and China “is suggesting a technology acceleration platform aimed at helping developing countries identify their technological needs and proposed projects and then help match with donors or technology providers. Beyond simply acquiring technology, the goal is to build local expertise by involving engineers and scientists from developing countries, fostering innovation and the development of homegrown technologies. This approach raises concerns among developed countries, as it could lead to increased competition in the future. Technologies tailored to developing countries’ specific contexts may give them a competitive edge, highlighting the broader links between technological ownership, economic power, and all the work here at UNFCCC,” elaborated Yu further.

The side-event helped participants understand the various priorities of developing countries at the Bonn session on the road to Belem.