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United Nations Climate Change Conference
Warsaw, Poland (COP 19/CMP9)
11–23 November 2013

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
ADP	–	Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action
COP	–	Conference of the Parties
CTCN	–	Climate Technology Center and Network
ETS	–	emissions trading scheme
GCF	–	Green Climate Fund
GHG	–	greenhouse gas
IPCC	–	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JCM	–	joint crediting mechanism
UN	–	United Nations
UNEP	–	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	–	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations Climate Change Conference took place in Warsaw, Poland from 11 to 23 November 2013. It included the 19th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 19) to the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 9th session of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 9). The Warsaw conference included meetings of three subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC: the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, and the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP). An extensive range of side events was held during the conference. Poland also hosted COP 14, the 2008 UN climate change negotiations held in Poznan. The 2013 conference drew more than 8,300 participants, including 4,022 government officials, 3,695 representatives of UN bodies and agencies, intergovernment and civil society organizations, and 658 members of the media. Given the modest expectations from the conference, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) sent only two staff members.¹

2. The conference took place amid growing evidence and calls for urgent action on climate change. A few days before the talks began, Typhoon Haiyan, one of the most powerful storms on record, wreaked havoc in the Philippines. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group 1 report on the physical science basis of climate change, released in September 2013, confirms with greater certainty that human activity is the dominant cause of observed warming since the mid-20th century.² The report predicts that warming is likely to exceed 2° Celsius (C) and even 4°C if actions are not taken now to substantially reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The World Meteorological Organization reports that the amount of GHG in the atmosphere climbed to a new record high in 2012, continuing an upward and accelerating trend. The United Nations Environment Programme's Emissions Gap Report of 2013 shows that even if nations meet their current climate pledges, emissions in 2020 are still likely to exceed the level consistent with a least-cost path toward the 2°C threshold, and failure to bridge this gap would later necessitate faster and more costly emissions reduction.³

II. EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

3. The Warsaw Conference was not envisaged to produce major breakthrough decisions but rather to involve intense discussions that would provide greater clarity on the following key areas: elements of a 2015 global agreement and associated timeline, mitigation ambitions to 2020, finance commitments, and a mechanism to address loss and damage from climate change.

A. Pathway to a 2015 Global Agreement

4. **Expectation.** The conference was expected to provide the groundwork for a new global climate agreement to be adopted at COP 21 in Paris in 2015 and come into force in 2020. It was to clarify the structure and timeline for the new agreement, especially for commitments that countries would make in curbing global GHG emissions after 2020. The objective was to provide

¹ The delegation comprised P. Bhandari, Advisor and Head, Climate Change Program Coordination Unit, Regional and Sustainable Development Department; and X. Lu, Advisor, Regional and Sustainable Development Department.

² The Working Group I report on the physical science basis is the first component of the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report. It states that confidence in the changes in the frequency and intensity of tropical cyclones linked to climate change is low. The Working Group II (adaptation) report will be released in March and the Working Group III (mitigation) report in April 2014. The IPCC's fifth assessment report cycle concludes with the publication of its synthesis report in October 2014.

³ United Nations Environment Programme. 2013. *The Emissions Gap Report 2013*. Nairobi.

the foundation for a clear and strong draft at COP 20 in Lima, Peru in 2014, and to make a negotiating text available before May 2015. The 2015 agreement will be universal and set binding caps on GHG emissions for developed and developing countries. It will succeed the Kyoto Protocol, which imposes GHG limits only on developed countries. The protocol had a first commitment period for 2008–2012 and was amended at the 2012 Doha COP to establish a second commitment period of 2013–2020.

5. The ADP is considering discussions on the new agreement. The group, established during COP 17 in 2011, is mandated to develop a new and inclusive global climate compact by 2015 in the form of a “protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties.”⁴

6. **Outcome.** Countries agreed to initiate or intensify domestic preparation of their “intended nationally determined contributions” to reduce GHG emissions. These plans are to be communicated well in advance of the 2015 COP or by the first quarter of 2015 for those “ready to do so.” The ADP is to identify, for the 2014 COP, the information countries will provide along with their contributions.

7. The term “contribution” replaced “commitments” in the original draft of the decision to provide flexibility for the legal nature of individual country actions. Underlying this is the familiar, enduring discord between developed and developing countries regarding responsibility for emission reduction. Developing countries advocate retaining the distinction of countries based on the UNFCCC’s principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and look to developed countries that have larger historical responsibility for emissions to take the lead. Developed countries want all countries to be treated the same in accordance with the Durban mandate that the 2015 agreement be “applicable to all.” They also point to the need to consider current (and future) emissions, which now largely come from fast-growing developing countries.

B. Pre-2020 Mitigation Ambition

8. **Expectation.** The conference was anticipated to provide clarity on mitigation ambition up to 2020, in particular, to address the gap between current commitments and efforts to reduce emissions and what is required by 2020 to keep warming below 2⁰C. The ADP is tasked to explore actions to close this gap. Only four countries have ratified the second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol (2013–2020),⁵ far from the required 144 ratifications for it to come into force. Moreover, the second commitment period covers only 15% of world emissions, further underlining the need for all countries to enhance their mitigation ambition.

9. **Outcome.** No new target or enhanced ambition was set for the near term. The Warsaw decision encourages countries to intensify technical work on opportunities with high mitigation potential. It urges countries that have not communicated their mitigation commitments and actions to do so, and developed countries to implement without delay their emission reduction targets under the UNFCCC and/or the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

⁴ United Nations. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. <http://unfccc.int/bodies/body/6645.php>

⁵ Bangladesh, Barbados, Mauritius, and the United Arab Emirates.

C. Finance

10. **Expectation.** The Warsaw conference was expected to set out more concrete plans for mobilizing scaled up finance to developing countries in the near term (to 2020) and the long term (2020 and beyond). Under the 2009 Copenhagen Accord and 2010 Cancun Agreements, developed countries committed to provide \$30 billion of fast-start finance over 3 years ending in 2012.⁶ They have also agreed to jointly mobilize \$100 billion per year in climate financing by 2020. The conference was to discuss the capitalization and operationalization of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Many developing countries are willing to contribute to global mitigation efforts depending on the delivery of promised finance by developed countries.

11. **Outcome.** The developing countries support an interim target of \$70 billion by 2016 with a goal of \$100 billion by 2020. However, no agreement was reached. The Warsaw decision urges developed countries to prepare biennial submissions on updated strategies and approaches for scaling up finance during 2014–2020, including quantitative and qualitative information on elements of a pathway. It also calls for "a very significant scale" of initial funding for the GCF by the COP 20 in 2014. It requests participants to enhance their enabling environments and policy frameworks. It insists on continued deliberations, including through in-session workshops and biennial high-level ministerial dialogue during 2014–2020.

12. During the conference, the Republic of Korea pledged \$40 million to the GCF (a reiteration of its earlier commitment in the context of hosting the GCF). Finland, Norway, and Sweden committed to capitalize the GCF once necessary arrangements are in place. For other funds under the UNFCCC, \$100 million was committed to the Adaptation Fund, with seven European governments committing \$72.5 million. Germany committed €50 million and the United Kingdom £50 million to the Least Developed Countries Fund for adaptation. Germany committed €50 million to the Special Climate Change Fund. In addition, key donor countries provided assurances of continued climate financing through a variety of channels.

D. Mechanism for Loss and Damage

13. **Expectation.** In accordance with the agreement at COP 18 in Doha, Warsaw was expected to establish institutional arrangements such as an international mechanism to address loss and damage in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. This includes extreme weather events and slow onset events, such as sea level rise. The small island developing states (which champion this issue) and other vulnerable countries want the mechanism to be separate from adaptation, as they see this damage to be beyond what can be addressed by adaptation.

14. **Outcome.** Countries agreed to establish a new Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage to enhance knowledge, action, and support to developing countries. The decision does not commit any funding and merely requests developed countries to provide financial support. The mechanism will be under the existing framework for climate change adaptation at least for the initial 3 years. Its structure, mandate, and effectiveness will be reviewed in 2016.

⁶ United Nations. 2009. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Copenhagen Accord. <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/cop15/eng/l07.pdf>; United Nations. 2010. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Cancun Agreements. http://unfccc.int/meetingscancun_nov_2010/items/6005.php.

15. The issue gained further prominence in the conference as Philippines lead negotiator Climate Change Commissioner Naderev Saño made an impassioned plea for decisive action on climate, announcing a hunger strike in solidarity with the victims of Typhoon Haiyan; other groups joined his cause.

E. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and Other Key Outcomes

16. The conference resulted in a package of decisions creating the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, which defines methodologies, institutional arrangements and result-based finance for REDD+.⁷ The decisions include environmental and human rights safeguards and systems to monitor, report, and verify emission reductions, and a national coordination system. The GCF is expected to play a key role in channelling finance for projects to host governments. The agreement was supported by pledges totaling \$280 million from Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

17. Work was completed on procedures for the UNFCCC's Climate Technology Center and Network (CTCN), which is now operating. The CTCN, the operational arm of the UNFCCC's technology mechanism, seeks to stimulate technology cooperation, and enhance the development and transfer of climate technologies in developing countries.⁸ The CTCN which is hosted and managed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is to work with the UNFCCC's financial mechanism, international financial institutions, and the private sector in pursuing its objective.

18. On adaptation issues, the most relevant decision relates to the financing of national adaptation plans of least developed countries by the Least Developed Countries Fund, through the National Adaptation Plan Global Support Program. The other developing countries can access the Special Climate Change Fund for their national adaptation plans. The Global Environment Facility administers both plans.

19. Negotiations on the framework for various approaches were fractious and deferred until 2014. The framework subsumes discussions on new market mechanisms and nonmarket approaches to address mitigation.

III. ADB ENGAGEMENT AT WARSAW

20. The two ADB staff members were actively involved in the conference, and participated in plenary meetings, side events, and meetings with bilateral and multilateral agencies and other development partners.

21. **ADB–Government of Japan side event.** On 15 November, ADB and the Ministry of Environment of the Government of Japan organized a side event, the Economics of Climate Change in East Asia. Key findings and policy recommendations were shared of a study on how strategies for adapting to climate change up to 2050 can be combined with measures to reduce

⁷ The REDD+ framework supports reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation as well as sustainable management of forests, conservation of forest carbon stocks and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.

⁸ The technology mechanism was established at the 2010 COP in Cancun, Mexico to facilitate the transfer and development of climate technologies in developing countries. It has two components: the Technology Executive Committee (its policy arm) and the CTCN (its operational arm).

GHG emissions. The study focused on the People's Republic of China (PRC), Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Mongolia.

22. Senior Japanese officials attended including the vice minister of Japan's Ministry of Environment; the special envoy of climate change of the Government of Mongolia; and a deputy director general of the PRC's National Development and Reform Commission, a chief negotiator for the PRC.

23. **Second steering committee on the Pilot Asia–Pacific Climate Technology Network and Finance Center.** Under this joint ADB-UNEP pilot project, ADB's technology finance center is focusing on investment facilitation while UNEP's network is supporting information-sharing among centers of climate technology excellence across the region. The pilot project which draws core financing support from the Global Environment Facility is expected to influence and eventually interface with UNFCCC's CTCN. The meeting, attended by representatives of ADB, UNEP, and the Global Environment Facility, discussed implementation progress of the network and center, and encouraged sharing experiences and lessons with other regional banks and UN agencies undertaking similar initiatives.

24. **Other events.** ADB participated in other side events and meetings on various topics (organizer in parentheses):

- (i) Climate change cooperation with development agencies (PRC government). The event discussed experience and lessons on climate change cooperation, and explored opportunities for new collaboration. The PRC and ADB are developing a memorandum of understanding on climate change.
- (ii) Carbon market development in the PRC (International Emissions Trading Association) and linking emissions trading schemes (ETs) (PRC government). In these side events, ADB shared information on its ongoing study on the linkage of ETs and learned about the developments of the PRC's ET pilot project. Findings of the ADB study could provide inputs for integrating the PRC and other ETs to build a regional ET.
- (iii) Nationally appropriate mitigation actions project development (Center for Clean Air Policy). At the meeting, ADB was informed of developments on the nationally appropriate mitigation actions initiative, an area that ADB could pursue with its developing member countries.⁹
- (iv) Low carbon urban development (World Resources Institute, the PRC's National Development and Reform Commission, World Wildlife Fund, and China Vanke¹⁰): In this side event, ADB shared information and experience in green cities development in Asia and the Pacific.
- (v) Joint crediting mechanism (JCM) roundtable (Japanese government). In this side event, ADB tracked developments on the JCM and demands of developing member countries for support in implementing JCM projects. The Government of Japan initiated the JCM to facilitate emission reduction actions, complementing the clean development mechanism of the UNFCCC.
- (vi) REN 21 steering committee meeting. The meeting approved the 2014 work program for REN 21 (Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century);

⁹ Nationally appropriate mitigation actions refer to voluntary measures of developing countries to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and sustainable development, and are supported and enabled by technology, financing, and capacity building. The term was introduced in the COP Bali Action Plan of 2007.

¹⁰ China Vanke is a residential real estate developer in the PRC. China Vanke. <http://www.vanke.com/EN/about.aspx>

ADB staff represented the ADB vice president for knowledge management and sustainable development, who is a member of the steering committee.¹¹

- (vii) Climate finance meetings (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, World Resources Institute, Climate Policy Initiative, and Overseas Development Institute). The meetings addressed the operationalization of the GCF, mobilization of private climate finance, and the role of institutional investors in climate finance readiness. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development expressed interest in collaborating with ADB on tracking climate finance.

25. **Joint MDB Report on Climate Finance.** On 15 November 2013, a group of multilateral development banks (MDBs), comprising ADB, the African Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, International Finance Corporation, and the World Bank, released their second joint MDB report on climate finance. According to the report, MDBs mobilized almost \$27 billion of climate finance worldwide in 2012, with 78% (more than \$21 billion) for mitigation and 22% (almost \$6 billion) for adaptation.¹² ADB accounted for 12% (\$3.28 billion) of total MDB climate finance, with \$2.39 billion expected for mitigation (15% of total MDB mitigation finance) and \$896 million for adaptation (11% of MDB adaptation finance). This collaborative effort was undertaken in recognition of the need to track and report financial flows that support climate mitigation and adaptation, to build transparency and accountability on climate finance commitments, and to monitor trends in climate-related investment. The revised ADB project classification, which will be rolled out in 2014, includes changes to institutionalize the monitoring of ADB climate finance based on the joint MDB approach.

IV. CONCLUSION

26. The Warsaw Conference delivered little to moderate progress on major areas of negotiations.

27. However, this slow and incremental progress is a reflection of the difficulties in a multilateral negotiation process, especially at a time when countries are overwhelmed by economic challenges and in an evolving global economic-political dynamic. A survey of domestic actions by developing member countries reflect their readiness to engage in measures to address (i) climate change driven by domestic considerations such as energy, water, and food security; and (ii) local environmental challenges. In this context, ADB's climate change priorities remain relevant and will guide ADB efforts to assist developing member countries in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. In the near term, ADB will continue to help developing member countries access existing and new sources of climate finance by tracking and increasing engagement with international financing mechanisms such as the GCF. ADB has provided inputs to the GCF design and been requested to contribute further in moving the fund into its operational phase. ADB will more actively catalyze greater private sector resources and expand support for adaptation in vulnerable countries especially least-developed and small island countries. It will help develop access of member countries to new financing opportunities offered by the REDD+ approach. It will consider new policies announced by

¹¹ REN 21. <http://www.ren21.net/REN21Activities/GlobalStatusReport.aspx>.

¹² European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Year. *Joint MDB Report on Climate Finance 2012*. <http://www.ebrd.com/downloads/sector/sei/climate-finance-2012.pdf>

governments that end public funding for new coal-fired plants in developing countries, except in rare circumstances.¹³

28. To help developing member countries meet the challenges of becoming a part of the new global climate change agreement, ADB will intensify its support for integrating low-emission and climate-resilient development plans in country partnership strategies and country operations business plans, establishing institutional frameworks, developing demonstration projects and/or initiatives in key areas for transformation, and fostering south–south cooperation.

29. The next COP is scheduled for Lima, Peru on 1–12 December 2014. A major event preceding this is the UN Climate Summit on 23 September convened by the UN Secretary General to increase global ambition and advance concrete climate action in support of the universal and legally binding agreement to be adopted in 2015.

¹³ At COP 19, the United Kingdom announced that it is joining the United States in limiting public funding for new coal-fired plants in developing countries to exceptional circumstances, such as in poorest countries when no economically feasible alternatives exist. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/uk-position-on-public-financing-of-coal-plants-overseas>. In September 2013, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden issued a joint statement with the United States that included a similar commitment to restrict coal funding. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/04/joint-statement-kingdom-denmark-republic-finland-republic-iceland-kingdo>