

LMDC MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

1. Introduction

The Plurinational State of Bolivia hosted the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) Ministerial meeting virtually on 18 October 2021. H.E. Juan Santos Cruz, Minister of Environment and Water of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, inaugurated the meeting. The meeting was convened to gather perspectives on the way forward for the UNFCCC's 26th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26).

2. History of broken promises undermines multilateral system

We wish to recall that the negotiations that led to the Paris Agreement were launched in 2011 on the basis of developed countries agreeing to new emission reduction obligations between 2013 to 2020 under the 2nd commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. Regrettably, ratification delays among many developed countries made the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol for its 2nd commitment period come into effect only on the last day of 2020.

The developed countries had also agreed in Doha in 2012 to revisit their emission reduction targets by the end of 2014 and to raise their ambition level. Not only was ambition level not raised, developed countries have in fact increased their emissions between 1990 and 2020. This, together with the refusal of some developed countries to assume new targets under the Kyoto Protocol, highlights their lack of mitigation ambition.

On the issue of delivery of climate finance, developed countries agreed in 2010 to mobilise USD 100 billion per year by 2020. Regrettably, here too they have fallen short of their agreement. In Paris, the 2020 timeline to deliver on the USD100 billion was shifted to 2025, with no assurance that it would be reached or with higher ambition, while at the same time developing countries are requested to raise their ambition on climate actions.

These failures to deliver on the commitments agreed to by developed countries undermines trust and confidence in the multilateral system.

3. The Paris Agreement

We also recall that the Paris Agreement was a delicate consensus between the developed and developing world, under which developing countries sought to preserve Convention and prevent further inequity. The LMDC played a key role in shaping what was a very delicate political balance. We averted the rewriting of the Convention. We ensured that the Paris Agreement is to enhance the implementation of the Convention and reflects its key elements – mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, and capacity building, – rather than be a mitigation-centric agreement bereft of any means of implementation or support to developing countries. We managed to ensure the retention of differentiation between developed and developing countries in the main elements of the Paris Agreement as the two groups of Parties have different responsibility to climate change and different capability to address it.

We ensured that the Paris Agreement will be implemented on the basis of the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) and that these are also recognised and operationalised in key areas of the Agreement.

We ensured the reflection of sustainable development and poverty eradication as important objectives of developing countries, as the context of actions by developing countries in some key areas. We also ensured that developed countries take the lead in mitigation and fulfil their obligation of providing finance support to developing countries.

4. Inequitable call for Net Zero by 2050

Despite their lack of ambition shown in the pre-2020 period, as well as in their Paris Agreement NDCs, major developed countries are now pushing to shift the goal posts of the Paris Agreement from what have already been agreed by calling for all countries to adopt Net Zero targets by 2050. This new ‘goal’ which is being advanced runs counter to the Paris Agreement and is anti-equity and against climate justice.

Demands for ‘Net zero’ emissions for all countries by 2050 will exacerbate further the existing inequities between developed and developing countries.

The Paris Agreement refers to achieving a balance between emissions and removal by sinks in the second half of this century as a global aspiration rather than as national targets for all countries. Achieving this global aspiration is on the basis of equity and CBDR, in the context of ensuring sustainable development and poverty eradication in developing countries and taking into consideration equity. This means that the historical responsibility for the predominant majority of cumulative anthropogenic emissions since the Industrial Revolution among developed countries must be fully recognized as a key element in determining how such global aspiration will be achieved equitably. Indeed, the most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on ‘The Physical Science Basis’ revealed that historical cumulative emissions are the cause of the climate crisis that the world faces today.

During their own industrialization phase, the developed countries have overused their domestic carbon space and used those of developing countries. Disregarding this historical cumulative and per capita cumulative carbon emissions by not reflecting it in their current emission reduction pledges under the Paris Agreement and by promoting distant net zero targets for themselves amount to furthering carbon injustice and inequity. Developed countries should, in acknowledgement of such historical cumulative and per capita cumulative carbon emissions, leave the remaining atmospheric space for the developmental rights of the developing world and aim for their full decarbonisation within this decade. If they continue to emit and occupy more atmospheric space for the next 30 years, the PA’s global goals and the Convention’s objective will not be met.

5. The Multiple Crises of Climate Change, Health and Economic Recovery

We are now witnessing an unprecedented combination of multiple crises in the world, which is particularly devastating for the developing world.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on peoples’ health and the economy has taken a major toll on developing countries. The responses to this have meant the diversion of national budgets and increased borrowings for many developing countries, raising the level of indebtedness. This coupled with the vaccine inequity between the developed and developing world and the continuing and deepening economic crisis in developing countries have compounded those challenges of ensuring sustainable development, eradicating poverty and addressing climate change, especially in the wake of devastating adverse impacts from floods, droughts and other

climatic effects.

As revealed by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), many developing countries can no longer achieve their ambitions set out in Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement due to the pandemic. Delivering on those ambitions will require international cooperation between the North and South on a coordinated and unprecedented scale, across a series of deeply interconnected economic, social and environmental challenges, with estimates of the required additional investments amounting to a minimum of 2 per cent of global GDP annually (upwards of USD 1.7 trillion per year) for the next few decades.

6. Honouring existing obligations under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement

Recognizing the current challenges faced by developing countries requires intensified multilateral cooperation, not intensified global economic and geopolitical competition and trade wars.

This includes, in particular, developed countries honouring their long-standing obligations under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, including on the provision of climate finance, technology transfer and capacity building to the developing countries.

This also requires developed countries to present at COP 26 a clear roadmap with a significant public funded component on their continued existing obligations to mobilize at least USD 100 billion per year from 2021 to 2025. Developed countries must increase the ambition of this collective goal and urgently initiate the process within the UNFCCC on setting the new collective quantified goal on finance support to be provided by developed countries to developing countries as soon as possible, including a detailed roadmap outlining milestones for setting a goal prior to 2025. For developing countries to enhance their ambition, developed countries must provide enhanced support.

Further, unilateral coercive measures against developing countries and proposals by developed countries to introduce unilateral carbon border adjustment measures in the name of climate change responses are discriminatory towards developing countries and violate international trade rules, as well as the principles of equity and the UNFCCC provisions. Such measures must be strongly opposed, as they are

detrimental to multilateral cooperation.

7. Unity of the LMDC and all others

The unity and strength of the LMDC is fundamental in the UNFCCC negotiations to preserve the interest of the Global South in the fight against climate change.

Our overarching objective is to ensure that our domestic policy space is not constrained as we address the challenges of climate change, fully fulfil our obligation under the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement while continuing to ensure sustainable development and poverty eradication in our countries.

Our successes thus far have only been possible with a strong team of negotiators and the support from the Third World Network that has acted as the LMDC secretariat. We must continue to provide strong support to our negotiating team. In addition, we must ensure resources to Third World Network so that they can continue to support our efforts.

The LMDC Ministers expressed deep gratitude to the Plurinational State of Bolivia for hosting the LMDC Ministerial meeting and looked forward to their next ministerial meeting at COP26. The LMDC Ministers also expressed their full support to COP26 Presidency and willingness to work closely and constructively with all other Parties and stakeholders towards a successful COP26 through the multilateral process that is conducted in an open and transparent, inclusive, Party-driven and consensus-based manner.