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UNFCCC subsidiary bodies launch work

Bonn, June 4 (Radhika Chatterjee) -- The 60th sessions of the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies (the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice [SBSTA]) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation [SBI]) launched work on 3 June, in Bonn, Germany, with the SBSTA Chair **Harry Vreuls (Netherlands)** and SBI Chair **Nabeel Munir (Pakistan)**, convening the opening plenaries of the two bodies together.

The work began in a bumpy manner with the opening plenary suspended twice before the agenda was adopted by Parties. The first suspension occurred due to the peaceful protest by South African and Argentinian climate justice activists, Tasneem Essop and Anabella Rosemberg, on the genocide that is being carried out by Israel in Palestine. The plenary resumed after the two were removed from stage and escorted out by UN security. (It has also been learnt that Essop and Rosemberg have also been de-badged for their action by UNFCCC).

The second suspension happened right before SBI Chair Nabeel proposed the adoption of its agenda. The **Russian Federation** blocked the agenda adoption and said it was doing so because of the delay by the host country, Germany, in granting visa to four of its colleagues. The agenda was eventually adopted after the Russian delegation was given assurance that its members would be granted visa.

The SB agendas were adopted after dropping two proposals made by Bolivia: titled "Developed countries' immediate and urgent action to achieve net zero emissions at the latest by 2030 and net negative emissions thereafter", and "Road map on financial support and means of implementation for alternative policy approaches to results-based payments, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests, to be effective at the 29th session of the COP and the 6th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement" (CMA). The Chairs announced that informal consultations on these items would be conducted and they would report back to Parties regarding the progress made at the closing plenary.

Demonstrating a spirit of "flexibility and constructiveness" in letting its proposals be removed from the agenda, **Bolivia**, speaking on behalf of **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC),** said, "It has been more than 30 years since our countries signed the UNFCCC, convinced that this agreement had the strength to solve the climate crisis. Regrettably, this has

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not happened…The truth is that in 30 years, Annex I countries have consistently used the strategy of blaming and shifting their responsibilities to developing countries." Bolivia said, "current developed countries' targets for achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 fall far short of what is needed to contain climate change and allow the developed countries to evade their fair share of climate action. Developed countries' commitments of net zero by 2050 are too little and too late," and that this means advancing "carbon colonialism". It also highlighted that "mitigation actions needed to achieve the Paris Agreement (PA) temperature goals requires that developed countries should take "immediate and urgent action to achieve net-zero emissions latest by 2030 and net-negative emissions thereafter". Bolivia also said it would present its proposal again for the next COP and CMA agendas, based on the outcomes of the consultations at SB60.

On its second proposal titled "roadmap on financial support and means of implementation for joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests, as a non-market approach, to be effective at COP29 and CMA 6", Bolivia speaking for itself elaborated on the rationale for the proposal. It said, "this approach has been approved in Article 5 of the PA and decision 16/CP.21, and has specific mandates for the provision of finance. It added, "this proposal is about unlocking the provision of finance for joint mitigation and adaptation for the integral and sustainable management of forests as a non-market-based approach."

Brazil speaking on behalf of itself, **South Africa, India and China (BASIC)** expressed concerns regarding SBI agenda item on "Reporting from and review of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention". It said the projections under compilation and synthesis of reports shows that from 2020 to 2030 there is an increase of emissions of Annex I Parties. Citing the urgent need for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it called for a dedicated space for discussions to understand what additional measures can be taken by Annex I Parties to reduce their emissions from 2020 to 2030. **Egypt** and the **LMDC** echoed Brazil's request. SBI chair Nabeel accepted their request and said the relevant agenda items will be considered separately.

Kenya, speaking on behalf of the **African Group**, also raised concerns during agenda adoption regarding the merging of consideration of Adaptation Committee (AC) report and the review of the work of the AC Expressing disagreement with the "legal form of the proposal", it said, "considering one side or part of an agenda item and deferring the other to the future may lead to misinterpretation for the next sessions and set new difficulties for the AC negotiations". According to sources, the two items have been separated into two agenda items.

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY INTERVENTIONS

Parties also conveyed their expectations at SB 60.

Uganda, speaking on behalf of **G77 and China**, welcomed the pledges made to the Loss and Damage Fund. Expressing a word of caution, it said, "the pledges and contributions should be commensurate with the scale of the needs for Loss and Damage; which is already costing developing countries hundreds of billions of dollars per year." It also asked for the further operationalisation of various loss and damage related decisions.

Speaking about the Global Stocktake (GST) decision at Dubai last year, Uganda said, "It is essential to recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to combating climate change. National sovereignty, circumstances, plans and strategies will determine each country's pathway to contributing to global efforts, always inspired by the highest level of ambition, and that "all outcomes, must be implemented in line with the need for urgent action and support to keep the 1.5°C within reach in this critical decade, and according to key principles including equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances (CBDR-RC), respecting the nationally determined nature of climate action." Referring to the need for a balanced and comprehensive global response, it said developed countries have to take "the lead in emissions reduction and providing urgent scaled-up means of implementation to developing countries".

Emphasizing on the need for a successful COP29 outcome in Baku, Azerbaijan, it said countries must work at Bonn for "setting an ambitious new collective quantified goal on climate finance (NCQG)," adding that "climate finance goals must be needs-based, addressing the trillions of dollars finance needs to meet global climate targets. Developed countries must significantly scale up the provision of climate finance and means of implementation to enable ambitious and urgent climate action at the scale and speed required. We must secure an outcome that enables the provision and mobilisation of finance for developing countries at the necessary scale and quality, while addressing the systemic dis-enablers of climate finance, including high cost of capital, limited fiscal space, and high transaction costs." Speaking about "non-enablers, such as unilateral measures, transaction costs and illicit financial flows that are creating reverse flows from south to north", it asked developed countries to address those. (Uganda was referring to the measures like Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism of the European Union).

It also asked for advancing the work in the SB sessions by operationalising various items like "the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience on the Global Goal on Adaptation and the UAE Just Transition Work Programme including through setting the roadmap for the UAE-Belem work programme… (and) the dialogue on implementing the Global Stocktake outcomes referred to in paras 97 and 98 (on finance) of the GST outcome and conducting the First Annual Global Stocktake dialogue."

It raised the need for "agreeing on effective modalities for the Technology Implementation Programme and enhancing the linkage between the Technology and Finance Mechanisms to ensure the delivery and transfer of needed technologies to developing countries and providing support for their endogenous development in developing countries".

Kenya, for the **African Group**, expressed concerns about the high number of mandated events in parallel with negotiations, that would create scheduling difficulties for smaller delegations. It reiterated the urgent need for agreeing on "modalities and plan of work for the UAE-Belem work programme on indicators here in Bonn" (in relation to the Global Goad on Adaptation) so that Parties "can advance the technical work required to deliver on the mandate by CMA7".

On the NCQG, the Africa Group expressed its extreme concern that the NCQG process is not offering certainty of delivering an ambitious quantum but rather moving in a direction that will not support the goals of the PA, adding that Africa will not accept an unambitious outcome that sets the floor as USD 100 and which invites all Parties to make voluntary contributions. "Currently, the continent allocated 5% of its GDP to adaptation and loss and damage, (and) is only able to mobilize about 10% of its needs for climate finance that is in the scale of USD 2.4 trillion by 2030 and only 2% of global renewable energy financing reaches the continent", it added.

It also highlighted that "debt is a major obstacle against achieving Africa's adaptive potential and development. African debt repayments exceed what it allocates to health and what it allocates to climate finance. The region stresses that just transitions, financing adaptation, and loss and damage, and debt swaps are our calls. A finance goal with a quantum in the trillions must provide developing countries, especially African countries, with the required catalysts for delivering on current pledges including in nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs), meeting Africa's renewable energy and clean cooking goals, and unlocking their potentials". It stressed "that grants and concessional financing for adaptation and loss and damage are the corner stone for the success".

On mitigation work programme (MWP), it reiterated that the "outcomes should be non-prescriptive, non-punitive and facilitative."

Kenya expressed disappointment at the choice of a more expensive venue (in Geneva) for the secretariat of the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD) "despite the Report on the host of the secretariat proposing UN Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) office in Nairobi as the most cost effective venue.".

On paragraph 97 of the GST decision, the Africa Group understood that "the dialogue's sole mandate is to discuss the availability, predictability and adequacy of the provision of finance to support the implementation of the current NDCs and NAPs, and deliver on the additional recommendations from the CMA.5 outcomes. Negotiations about the modalities must be considered on the basis of this understanding."

On the GST Annual Dialogue, Kenya said it "must do more than sharing of views on best practices and challenges for NDC preparation. It should enhance understanding on how Parties are implementing the outcomes on adaptation, technology transfer and development, and energy transition, in a manner that is just, orderly and equitable, and takes into consideration the needs to achieve sustainable development and eradicate poverty." It also asked for the Annual Dialogue to "provide guidance to make international cooperation effective and stimulate ambition across the board". "We expect this dialogue to conclude at the end of 2025", it added further.

Bolivia, for the **LMDC**, highlighted several messages to advance the "common interest of saving Mother Earth and her peoples from the devastating impacts of climate change". Calling for multilateralism to deliver, it said, "the direction of its travel, though, remains far from encouraging… Goalposts are being shifted, mandates are being selectively viewed and the burden of climate action is being transferred to developing countries." In a scathing criticism of developed countries, it said, their "unilateral coercive measures" were impacting "negatively" developing countries. "We hear all kinds of things — terms that do not belong to the Convention and its PA — being used unabashedly, especially in conversations around finance. This needs to change," it added.

Speaking in the context of next round of NDCs, it said, "The level of ambition in developing countries will be determined by the level of support to be provided, not only on finance but also technology and capacity building. We need clear assurances that this support will be forthcoming from developed countries. Materially, the NCQG—and the finance agenda—will determine how words translate into actions—and set the course of climate action for developing countries".

Referring to net zero goals, it said, "For developing countries, the timeframes between peaking and net zero emissions are much, much shorter than that of developed countries. It's high time our partners demonstrate leadership. If we are to achieve our temperature goal, we need the developed countries to achieve net zero emissions latest by 2030 and net negative immediately thereafter. By setting targets in 2040 or 2050, developed countries are simply asking to continue misappropriating the carbon space and blocking developing countries' right to development, therefore increasing the gaps between the global north and the global south. This goes against equity".

Highlighting the need for delivery of ambitious climate finance, Bolivia said, "It is unacceptable that those responsible for climate change are asking us to pay further". It further added, "It is unacceptable that they are pressuring us on transitions, without the means, and without such transition being reflected in their own climate action plans".

Brazil speaking on behalf of **BASIC** said "our changing climate requires progress towards sustainable development and the mobilization of all of humanity's resources to tackle structural inequalities within and among countries. We call the international community to come together in a united front to combat climate change". It added that now is the "time we strengthen multilateralism and reject unilateralism.

On climate finance, it said the NCQG goal has to be "well beyond the floor of USD 100 billion per year by developed countries, as the financing needs of developing countries now amount to trillions of dollars. The legal mandate around the NCQG emerges from climate finance obligations developed countries have under international law, in particular under the Convention and its PA. As per Article 9 of the PA, public sources must be at the very core of the NCQG. Most importantly, the NCQG must fulfil one the most consequential gap in our regime: the definition of climate finance. In addition to quantity, the NCQG must reflect quality in climate finance, which refers to access, efficacy and clarity on what climate finance is and on what is not."

Referring to ongoing work on the biennial transparency reports (BTR), it said, "during SB60, the new tools developed by the UNFCCC Secretariat to facilitate the preparation of the BTRs must be reviewed. Parties will also discuss how the technical and financial support provided by developed countries is helping developing countries meet their transparency commitments under the regime".

It also asked for progress to be made in the SB session on adaptation negotiations, especially, "the structure of the UAE-Belém work program on indicators for the agreed targets (for the GGA)," a "process that shall be concluded at COP30 in Brazil".

It also expressed concerns about "some developed countries… adopting unilateral coercive measures in the name of climate action, such as carbon border adjustment mechanisms, that pose a serious threat to the sustainable development of developing countries".

Samoa, speaking on behalf of **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** said, "The GST outcome provide a clear collective commitment to course correct to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the 1.5 C temperature goal, and recognises that more ambition and accelerated implementation is needed in this decade" and called "to expedite efforts to phase out fossil fuels and end fossil fuel subsidies." Calling for ambitious climate mitigation action, it asked for peaking global emissions before 2025.
It also asked for the new NDCs to be aligned to 1.5-degree C goal and to "cover all greenhouse gasses, sectors, and categories. These NDCs must also detail how Parties plan to implement the mitigation elements of the GST outcome." It wanted the MWP to focus on delivering actionable solutions to support the GST implementation, particularly in mitigation and energy packages.

On the issue of climate finance, Samoa said, "Implementation of current NDCs will require the mobilization of USD 6 trillion. Grant funding is decreasing rapidly while the finance required for adaptation action is growing." Samoa said that new, additional, predictable, and adequate climate finance must be aligned with the best available science" and called for a new financial goal that is fit for purpose, which should have clear sub-goals to mobilize and deliver finance on adaptation, mitigation, and loss and damage.

Regarding the Loss and Damage Fund, it said the new fund established to address loss and damage needs to be capitalized as soon as possible to ensure the smooth launch of its activities.

Venezuela, speaking for **Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua**, and itself (**ALBA**) said, "The GST outcome cannot be used as a basis for imposing conditionalities on developing countries' domestic policies, especially with regard to access to finance, technology transfers or support for capacity building. Nor can it be the basis for the imposition of unilateral coercive measures or trade measures based on climate criteria that have adverse effects on developing countries." Referring to the next round of NDCs, it said, "the level of ambition will be determined by the level of support not only in finance but also in technology and capacity building. Without adequate support from the Means of Implementation it is an enormous challenge for developing countries to implement actions at the national level".

Criticizing unilateral coercive measures, Venezuela said its consequences "represent a crime against humanity (and) are becoming more evident every day, covering a wide spectrum, constituting actions that directly and indirectly affect the capacities to respond to the climate crisis and the response capacities of the states to guarantee the right to development and basic rights such as water, or to a healthy environment".

Venezuela ended ALBA's statement by expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people, who are victims of a genocidal war that has cut short the lives of thousands of their children. It added that "this conflict has also had a negative impact on the current climate crisis. According to a study published earlier this year, the emissions generated during the first two months of the Gaza war were greater than the annual carbon footprint of more than 20 of the world's most climate-vulnerable nations. The research, conservatively, by analyzing only one set of carbon-intensive activities, estimated that the climate cost of the first 60 days of Israel's military response was equivalent to burning at least 150,000 tons of coal."

Saudi Arabia, for the **Arab Group**, said that arriving at an ambitious finance goal that is in line with principles of UNFCCC and the PA is an important priority for the group. It also called for viewing the GST outcome holistically. Reiterating the importance of realising the goals of just transition and poverty eradication, it said both should occur in a just manner, and laid emphasis on the principles of CBDR.

Malawi, for the **Least Developed Countries (LDC)** laid emphasis on the need to achieve 1.5-degree C goal, and asked countries to put forward ambitious NDCs, adding that they could be implemented when developing countries receive ambitious climate finance. It said the NCQG should be "at scale, largely public finance" and "must be accessible".

Honduras, speaking on behalf of Independent **Alliance of Latin America and Caribbean (AILAC)** said the dialogue provided in GST outcome document provides a space where discussions on implementation for goals contained in GST would be crucial for operationalization of the dialogue. It pointed out key aspects on its ambition agenda, including: the need for maintaining in depth discussions on how to align with NDCs and ensure follow up on outcomes of the GST; and the need to focus on how to achieve the means of implementation. On the NCQG, it said AILAC stands for a "new ambitious level goal that addresses mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage". Further, this goal "shouldn't increase debt levels" of AILAC countries and keep in mind the financing challenges they face due to high cost of capital and limited fiscal space, which prevent them from addressing their goals of sustainable development. Highlighting the important role of rainforests, it said it was crucial to stop their deforestation.

The **European Union (EU)** said the SB sessions are a stepping stone towards achieving a successful outcome in Baku at COP29. It called the NCQG as a "unique opportunity to strengthen international climate finance landscape". Acknowledging the need for a goal, it said it has to be ensured that mobilization of finance comes from a wide variety of sources and is accompanied with the creation of enabling environments. It further added that the provision of climate finance should be a global effort, capturing evolved circumstances and capabilities. Highlighting the limitation of the ability of public finance to deliver on the goal, it said "public resources alone will not suffice". It called for sending "a strong" signal to global economy, including international market, and both the domestic and global levels. It further added that it will engage in the Sharm el Sheikh Dialogue on Article 2.1.c and its complementarity with Article 9 of the PA on the issue of how to align climate finance flows to climate resilient pathways, and how to create enabling environments.

The EU also said that it is crucial for the upcoming round of NDCs to be ambitious and that these NDCs "should include economy wide absolute emission reduction targets" and energy transition targets related to the paragraph 28 of the GST outcome document from Dubai (on the global mitigation efforts). It also shared that EU has started preparation for its next NDCs, which will be informed with the European Commission's 2040 climate targets.

Switzerland, for the **Environmental Integrity Group**, on the NCQG, highlighted the need to discuss issues relating to contributors and recipients in this regard and the need for the goal to "encompass various sources". It added that the goal "should ensure that investment of public finance" is directed "where they are most needed". It expressed support for the idea of achieving global peaking of emissions by 2025. On the issue of NDCs, Switzerland said it was important to consider how the NDCs "will contribute in energy transitions". It said it was looking forward to substantial outcomes on the MWP and the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP). Referring to carbon markets it said they "hold promise for emissions reduction around the globe" and the task relating to this topic which was left unfinished at COP28 needs to be completed by COP30.

Canada speaking for the **Umbrella Group** highlighted the "critical" moment for keeping 1.5 C within reach and called on all countries, including "major emitters to include in their NDCs" ambitious emission reduction plans which aligned with the goal, and focused on economy wide reductions. It said NDCs will "determine if we keep 1.5 C within reach" and that NDCs present an opportunity to "send clear investment signal". On the NCQG, it said the "new goal must be multilayered", including public and private, domestic and international aspects. It further highlighted on the need for a "broad set of contributors that reflect current set of realities and capabilities".