

Non Traditional Security Digest

COP26 Key Outcomes

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Introduction

The 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26) was held from 31 October, 2021 to 13 November, 2021 in Glasgow. COP26 was attended by almost 120 world leaders along with 40,000 participants from approximately 200 countries of the world. After intense negotiations on various climate issues, the outcome of the summit resulted in the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#).

Brief Key Agreements

Recognizing the emergency

At the COP 26 summit, countries reaffirmed their commitment of limiting the global temperatures below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and further called for efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. States also expressed their concerns that human activities have resulted in causing around 1.1 °C of warming and the carbon budgets that were consistent with achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goal are now comparatively small and are getting rapidly depleted.

Accelerating action

Countries at the COP26 stressed on the urgency of climate action in this decade. They called for reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 45 per cent so as to reach the targets of net zero emissions by 2050. The Glasgow Climate Pact also called upon the countries to prepare stronger National Action Plans by next year instead of 2025, to show a serious approach in climate action. Countries also called on UNFCCC to do an annual NDC Synthesis Report to gauge the present level of ambition.

Issue of Fossil Fuels

Participating countries at COP26 agreed upon the provision of "phasing-down" of coal power-based plants and also agreed to phase out "inefficient" fossil fuel subsidies. Negotiation over these issues were quite tough at Glasgow, but ultimately the countries reached a mutually agreed conclusion on the issue of fossil fuel at the final proceedings of the COP 26 summit.

Climate Finance

The issue of Climate Finance was greatly highlighted by the developing countries at COP 26 in Glasgow. The developing countries emphasized that the developed countries should fulfil their agreed financial obligation of providing US\$100 billion a year to developing countries to fight climate change. Voicing the "regret," the Glasgow outcome strongly urged the developed countries to fully deliver on the US\$100 billion goal at the earliest. To this, the developed countries, in a report, reaffirmed their commitment and expressed confidence that the target would be met in 2023.

Supporting Adaptation

The Glasgow Pact called for doubling the financial support to the developing countries for building resilience programs and adaptation mechanisms to address the issue of climate change. This would involve a significant increase in finances for protecting the lives and livelihoods of the people in the poor countries, which are being impacted by climate change. Currently, only 25 per cent of such finances goes towards such adaptation measures with 75 per cent of these financial obligations going towards green technologies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. A working program

to define a global goal on adaptation has been also established at COP 26 which will identify collective needs and solutions to the climate crisis.

Finalizing Paris rulebook

At COP 26 all the countries reached at an agreement on the remaining issues of [Paris rulebook](#) and agreed upon the operational details of the [Paris Agreement](#). It also included finalizations of norms related to carbon markets which would allow countries for carbon trading to meet their emission targets. Further, negotiations on an Enhanced Transparency Framework were also concluded at the COP 26. This would provide common timeframes and agreed formats for countries to regularly report on climate progress and would provide greater confidence that all countries are contributing their share to the global effort in dealing with climate challenges.

Focusing on loss & damage

To address the issue of climate change and its increasing impact on people in developing countries, states at COP 26 agreed to strengthen the [Santiago Network](#). The Santiago Network will connect developing countries with technical assistance, knowledge and resources providers to address climate risks. The COP 26 summit also launched a new “Glasgow dialogue” to discuss arrangements for the funding of activities to avert, minimize and address loss and damage associated with climate change.

Forests Protection

Countries at COP 26 took a [landmark decision](#) to stop and reverse land degradation and forest loss by 2030. This was supported by 137

countries and the pledge to same was backed by \$12 billion and \$7.2 billion in public and private funding respectively. The commitment was even signed by more than 30 financial institutions covering over \$8.7 trillion of global assets and they called for eliminating their investment in activities linked to deforestation.

Methane Emissions

At the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties about 103 countries have signed the [Global Methane Pledge](#) that aims to cut methane emissions by at least 30 per cent by 2030. Methane is one of the most potent greenhouse gas that as per United Nations, accounts for 25 per cent of the global warming worldwide. According to the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, methane accounts for about half of the 1.0° Celsius net rise in global average temperature since the pre-industrial era.

Zero Emission Vehicles

At COP 26 over 30 countries and about six major vehicle manufacturers with some other actors, have agreed to work together to make zero-emission vehicles accessible, affordable, and sustainable globally by 2040. Nineteen governments have also agreed to support the establishment of ‘green shipping corridors’ – zero-emission shipping routes between two ports. It would involve deploying zero-emission vessel technologies and putting alternative fuel and charging infrastructure in place at ports to allow for zero-emission shipping on key routes across the globe.

Political declaration on energy transition in South Africa

At COP 26, leaders from South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Germany, and the European Union announced a [ground-breaking partnership](#) to support South Africa with \$8.5 billion over the next 3-5 years to make a just transition away from coal, to a low-carbon economy.

Private finance

Private financial institutions along with central banks at COP 26 announced their moves to realign trillions of dollars towards achieving global net-zero emissions. Among them is the [Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero](#), with over 450 firms across 45 countries that control \$130 trillion in assets. These have called upon its members to set robust, science-based near-term targets to achieve net-zero emissions.

India's position at COP 26 Climate Summit

Indian [Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his speech at COP26](#) highlighted India's commitment to address the issue of climate change. He mentioned that India ranks 4th in the world in installed renewable energy capacity. He highlighted that India's non-fossil fuel energy has increased by more than 25% in the last 7 years and now it has reached 40% of its total energy mix. Commenting on India's vast railway network, the prime minister mentioned that Indian Railway has set a tremendous target of making itself a 'Net Zero' emitter by 2030. This would reduce net emissions by 60 million tonnes annually. In his remarks, he also mentioned about India's massive LED bulb campaign

that is playing a significant role in reducing emissions by 40 million tonnes annually. The Prime Minister also talked about India's revolutionary step towards solar power and stressed on country's push for International Solar Alliance. The Prime Minister outlined India's approach as 'Panchamrit' (five elements). **First**, India would take its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030. **Second**, India will meet 50 per cent of its energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030. **Third**, India will reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now till 2030. **Fourth**, by 2030, India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by more than 45 per cent. **And fifth**, by the year 2070, India will achieve the target of Net-Zero. The prime minister in his concluding remarks mentioned that these 'Panchamrits' will be an unprecedented contribution of India to climate action. Finally, commenting on the important issues of climate finance and low-cost climate technologies, the prime minister urged the developed countries to fulfil these obligations at the earliest.

China's position at COP26 Climate Summit

Chinese President Xi Jinping issued a written statement to the COP26. In his [letter](#) he mentioned that the adverse impacts of climate change have become increasingly evident, presenting a growing urgency for global action. In his letter, President Xi mentioned that the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement provide the fundamental legal basis for international cooperation on climate change. Therefore, all the parties need to build on existing consensus, increase mutual

trust, step-up cooperation and work together to deliver a successful COP26 in Glasgow. Second, Xi highlighted the need to focus on concrete actions. He mentioned that all the parties need to honour their commitments and set realistic targets to do their best according to their national conditions to deliver their climate action measures. He called upon the developed countries to not only do more themselves but also, provide support to the developing countries to do better. Third, President Xi highlighted the need to accelerate towards a green transition. Commenting on China's approach, the President in his letter mentioned that China would continue to prioritize its approach of ecological conservation and would pursue green and low-carbon paths for development. In order to achieve this, the country would speed up its transition to renewable energy and would build large wind and photovoltaic power stations. Xi's letters also talked about specific implementation plans for key areas such as energy, industry, construction and transport, coal, electricity, iron, steel, and cement to be rolled out in near future.

United States' position at COP 26 Climate Summit

US President Joe Biden in his [speech at COP 26 in Glasgow](#), highlighted that the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius is within reach if the parties come together and commit to their part determination and ambition. He mentioned that his [Build Back Better Framework](#) will make historic investments in clean energy. He mentioned that US is going to cut greenhouse gas emissions by well over a gigaton by 2030, while making it more affordable for

consumers to save on their own energy bills with tax credits for things like installing solar panels, weatherizing their homes, lowering energy prices. He also talked about delivering clean air and water, electrifying fleets of school buses, increasing credits for electric vehicles, and addressing legacy pollution. President Biden mentioned that all this will incentivize clean energy manufacturing, the building of solar panels and wind turbines which are growing energy markets of the future. Therefore, it will further create good-paying union jobs for American workers. He further mentioned that all these actions of the US will reduce its emissions by 50 to 52 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. President Biden in his speech also called for releasing the US' long-term strategy, which presents a vision of achieving the goal of a net-zero emissions economy by 2050.

Speaking on the issue of climate finance, Biden mentioned that his administration is working with the Congress to quadruple US climate finance support for developing countries by 2024, including a significant increase in support for adaptation efforts. He also highlighted that US along with European Union is launching a [Global Methane Pledge](#) to collectively reduce methane emissions.

Russia's position at COP 26 Climate Summit

Alexey Overchuk, Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation gave a national remark on behalf of the Russian Federation at the COP 26 summit. In his remarks, he mentioned that addressing global warming and preventing climate change requires all nations to put their differences aside and

work together to solve these concerns. He highlighted that as a result of global warming Russia is seeing an increase in desert areas, soil erosion, forest fires, floods, and permafrost melting.

He also mentioned that Russian President Vladimir Putin has stated that [Russia will achieve carbon neutrality by the year 2060](#). This promise is based on a holistic strategy that addresses not only the issues of controlling and reducing emissions, but also the management and improvement of Russia's natural ecosystems' greenhouse gas absorption capacities, such as forests, tundra, agriculture, marshes, and oceans. In his speech, he also mentioned that Russia's pledge to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 does not imply that Russia will not achieve this target sooner but, the effectiveness of the transition is contingent on the availability of new technology and finances to fund it. He further highlighted that in order to achieve its climate ambitions, Russia is working on improving its forest management techniques, boosting wildland fire prevention and response capabilities, maintaining and expanding wilderness areas, and is introducing innovative farming practices and transitioning to sustainable technologies.

Commenting on Russia's energy firms, Overchuk highlighted that Russian energy firms are introducing low-emission technology to assure greener fuel production, delivery, and distribution to customers. He further mentioned that Russia's energy balance is already an example of one of the lowest carbon emissions per unit, with 86 per cent of Russia's energy output coming from solar, wind, natural gas, nuclear, and

hydropower. Finally, he highlighted that the transition to a new economy should be built on an equilibrium in which investment returns and long-term asset value increases are balanced by a dependable energy supply that fulfils rising energy demand as well as the goals of greenhouse gas emission reduction and absorption.

European Union at COP 26 Climate Summit

Speaking at COP 26 summit in Glasgow, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, highlighted the importance of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius. She asserted that this limit is achievable and the world needs to come together to achieve it. [In her remarks](#), she also mentioned that Europe with its European Green Deal will spare no effort to become the first climate-neutral continent. She urged all nations to speed up towards net-zero emissions. President Leyen, outlined four key points to address the climate issue. First, she called upon states to reduce emissions by 2030 and made her call for net-zero emissions by 2050. Second, she asserted that there is a need for a robust framework of rules that needs to be put in place to address various climate issues that remain unaddressed. Third, and most importantly she called on mobilizing climate finance for supporting vulnerable countries and help them leapfrog to clean growth. She asserted that the European Union will fully contribute to achieve global goals on adaptation. She underlined that Europe is already the largest provider of climate finance and almost half of its finances are targeted for adaptation. Finally, she mentioned that since innovation

and technology are the key variables to address climate change, the world needs to scale up the measures to deploy it.

Small Island State at COP26 summit in Glasgow

Lia Nicholson, the lead negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), [in her remarks at COP 26 summit](#) cited the “terrifying” implications of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change’s latest scientific report. She called upon all the Parties to submit an enhanced NDC (climate plan). She called upon the parties and asserted that “...Governments must be called to account and explain to the world and their own people what could be more urgent than this crisis and the failure to act.” Nicholson strongly criticized the developed nations and their failure to keep their \$100bn per year climate promise to developing nations by 2020. She highlighted that this delay will have real impacts on the lives and livelihoods of climate victims. She noted that the continued subsidization of fossil fuels added further “insult to injury”. Nicholson warned that developed nations continued failure to act will force islands’ hand in seeking compensation for “loss and damage” incurred. She further mentioned that Climate finance is not a ‘charity’ and there are no ‘donors’ in this process.

Nepal’s Position at COP 26

Nepal’s Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba at the COP 26 Summit, highlighted his commitment that Nepal would reach net-zero emissions by 2045. He further mentioned that Nepal will ensure that 15% of its total energy

demand is supplied from clean energy sources. He also called for maintaining 45% of the country under forest cover by 2030. In his remarks, Deuba mentioned that 80% of Nepal’s population is at risk from natural and climate-induced hazards. He further urged the world leaders to recognize the specific climate vulnerability in the high mountains and accord high priority to the mountain agenda in all climate-related negotiations. The Prime Minister also highlighted that keeping the global temperature below 1.5° Celsius is vital for mountain people. Lastly, he mentioned that to raise awareness on the climate crisis in the Himalayas, his government will host SagarmathaSambad – a dialogue named after Mt. Everest.

BASIC grouping at COP 26

India, on behalf of **Brazil, South Africa, India, and China (BASIC)**, highlighted a road map for the delivery of the promised \$100 billion climate finance support for developing countries, and a carbon market mechanism that facilitates private sector engagement in the fight against climate change. The Basic grouping also said its views were aligned with the position taken by the western African country of Guinea on behalf of the G77 group of developing nations and China.

Non-Traditional Security Centre

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