

# Beyond Copenhagen

## A Collective Action against Climate Change, INDIA

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It is clear that the reason developing country Parties are running away from the Kyoto Protocol and pushing for a political settlement is because they do not intend to take any responsibility for global warming and climate change. This has been particularly evident in the run up to COP15 in Bangkok, and Barcelona. Ambassador Mumumba Di-Aping, Chair of the G77 has noted that "it is clear now that the rich countries want a deal outside the Kyoto agreement. It would be based on a total rejection of their historical responsibilities. This is an alarming development. The intention of developed countries is clearly to kill to protocol."

### DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SPLIT IS WIDENING

In today's plenary session on CDM (Clean Development Mechanism), many small developing countries criticized India and China. Thus, the developing country split is widening, and the chance for pressurizing the developed country blocks for a legally binding reduction is also receding. Small island states and poor African nations vulnerable to climate impacts laid out demands for a legally-binding deal tougher than the Kyoto Protocol. This was opposed by richer developing states such as China, which fear tougher action would curb their growth. Tuvalu demanded - and got - a suspension of negotiations until the issue could be resolved. Tuvalu's negotiator Ian Fry made clear that his country could accept nothing less than full discussion of its proposal for a new legal protocol, which was submitted to the UN climate convention six months ago.

"Tuvalu is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change, and our future rests on the outcome of this meeting."

The call was backed by other members of the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS), including the Cook Islands, Barbados and Fiji, and by some poor African countries including Sierra Leone, Senegal and Cape Verde.

Several re-iterated the demand of small island developing states that the rise in the global average temperature be limited to 1.5C, and greenhouse gas concentrations stabilized at 350 parts per million (ppm) rather than the 450ppm favored by developed countries and some major developing nations.

Fast-growing economies such as China, India and South Africa oppose the lower target of 350ppm because they feel that meeting it would retard economic development.

Here, they also opposed Tuvalu's call for a new legally-binding protocol to run alongside the existing Kyoto Protocol, arguing that the existing convention and Kyoto agreement are tough enough.

The split within the developing country bloc is highly unusual, as it tends to speak with a united voice.

*(By Mr Soumya Dutta)*

### Politics at Play-II

#### Update on COP15 developments for 09 Dec 2009

There was a buzz of something impending in the air at the Bella Centre as Todd Stern, the US Chief Negotiator arrived. Not much to mince words, he fired a broadside at China, "We expect China to make considerable cuts in its carbon emissions despite being a developing country". Taking a swipe at developing countries, he made a pointed reference that the current climate negotiation is not about morality; it's about mathematics! Further, China will also not be eligible for any assistance from the US on climate mitigation and adaptation. Stern feels that a country sitting on trillions of dollars ought to fend for itself. How fundamental can things get, one wonders.

The forceful insistence on China to make emission cuts did not come as much of a surprise to most since India seems to have already played into the US' hands by floating a timid version of an agreement at the G77+China meeting. One might recall the leaked letter of Jairam Ramesh a month back where he had made a similar proposition. The proverbial dots are thus now being joined at Copenhagen.

One would recall a similar power play during the WTO mini-ministerial at Geneva in 2008. The negotiations supposedly collapsed on the issue of Special Safeguard Measures and India was singled out as the deal-breaker. This was despite the fact that India had already conceded to the US's demands on SSM. The talks collapsed because the US did not want to face the next issue (its cotton subsidies) which would have anyways brought down the talks.

This is exactly what seems like being re-enacted at Copenhagen on the Climate negotiations. The US is unwilling to bring down its emissions despite using the right vocabulary by President Obama. This time round, it seems China's turn to be painted the deal breaker. As of now, Xie Zienhua, China's chief negotiator, has seemingly ignored Stern's outburst and has indicated that he will wait for President Obama to take a final call on the issue when he gets to Copenhagen.

*(By Bhaskar Goswami)*

## SMALL ISLAND NATION – STALLS BIG NEGOTIATIONS

Small Island nation Tuvalu, in imminent danger of getting obliterated from the map by the rising waters of the Pacific Ocean – comes out with strong demands and proposals for binding emission cuts by ALL Large emitter nations, and succeeds in stalling the climate negotiations.

On the end of the 3rd day of the international climate negotiations, COP15, at Copenhagen, a bold and 'controversial' proposal by the very small island nation of Tuvalu located in the Pacific Ocean, managed to create a huge flutter, increased the rift between developing countries, and finally brought the negotiations to a halt. What Tuvalu is basically asking is for internationally (legally) binding emissions reduction targets by ALL BIG Emitting Countries, including those in the developing country block. And this created a lot of unrest amongst the big-developing polluters, including China, India, Brazil, South Africa, etc. None of these "emerging economies" are willing to accept legally binding emission reduction targets – rather preferring only Energy Intensity targets determined by national goals. But many small & poor developing countries, the LDCs (Least Developed Countries), and particularly the Island nations (AOSIS – Association of Small Island States) along with Bangladesh have supported the Tuvaluan proposal.

Tuvalu's proposals got tremendous support from a large number of Climate Justice Movements from all over the world (the India-climate-justice forum holds somewhat similar view), the very active and vocal youth climate groups etc. Tuvalu demanded that the negotiations be halted till they get clear answers about their (and other island nations) right to exist. The negotiations had to be brought to a halt.

As the rich nations and along with them, the corporate lobbies and the big developing countries are slowly moving away from a justice & equity focused climate deal, the small island states, African nations etc – are taking the leadership of pushing for a just agreement on climate. India, China etc. are being seen to slowly move away from any frontline leadership position in this, and increasingly – the poorer developing countries are questioning their (govt.) positions.

*(by Soumya Dutta)*

## Why Danish Political Agreement must be rejected

Proposed Political Agreement by Denmark belies the intention of Annex-1 countries and Europe in particular on COP15. It is clear that Europe has failed in its climate change leadership. The document proposes a long term emission reduction target by 50% of 1990 levels by Annex 1 Parties by 2050. However, IPCC and Africa have been calling for emissions reduction target of at least 80% to 95% below 1990 levels by 2050.

### Four Reasons why the Danish Political Agreement must be rejected

- (1) It proposes emission cuts and targets for developing countries;
- (2) It proposes to divide developing countries into new categories, e.g. "the most vulnerable";
- (3) It proposes to weaken the financial role of the UN in climate change and proposes traditional 'beggar my neighbour approach';
- (4) It suggests to cap emissions from developing countries to not more than 1.44 tonnes of carbon per person by 2050, while allowing rich countries to emit 2.67 tonnes.



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## POLITICS AT PLAY Contd...

Meanwhile, the leaked Danish text is causing considerable embarrassment to the UN what with the Climate Chief Yvo de Boer issuing a weak defence: "it is an informal paper ahead of the conference given to a number of people for the purposes of consultations". The G77 sure is not buying any of this and the slam game is on!

Meanwhile, a summit of EU leaders will be held on 10-11 December at Brussels. Informal talks with a delegate indicate that the EU will remain steadfast on immediate action on the climate front by 2010 although its commitments will be conditional on what others place on the table. It is also likely that the EU will seek a six month roadmap after COP 15 is over before a final deal is agreed upon - this is a fresh development.

Amidst all this, there has been not a word coming from the Indian team. Indian delegates, including the Chief Negotiator Shyam Saran, have not held a single Press Conference till date. There are speculations rife about Saran's abrupt trip back to New Delhi. One hopes that the Delegation speaks to the Press and Indian CSO representatives once Saran rejoins the negotiations the day after tomorrow, ostensibly with a fresh brief in light of the complete goof up on the G77+China coalition.