Does Lima fall a long way short to Paris?

MIZAN R. KHAN

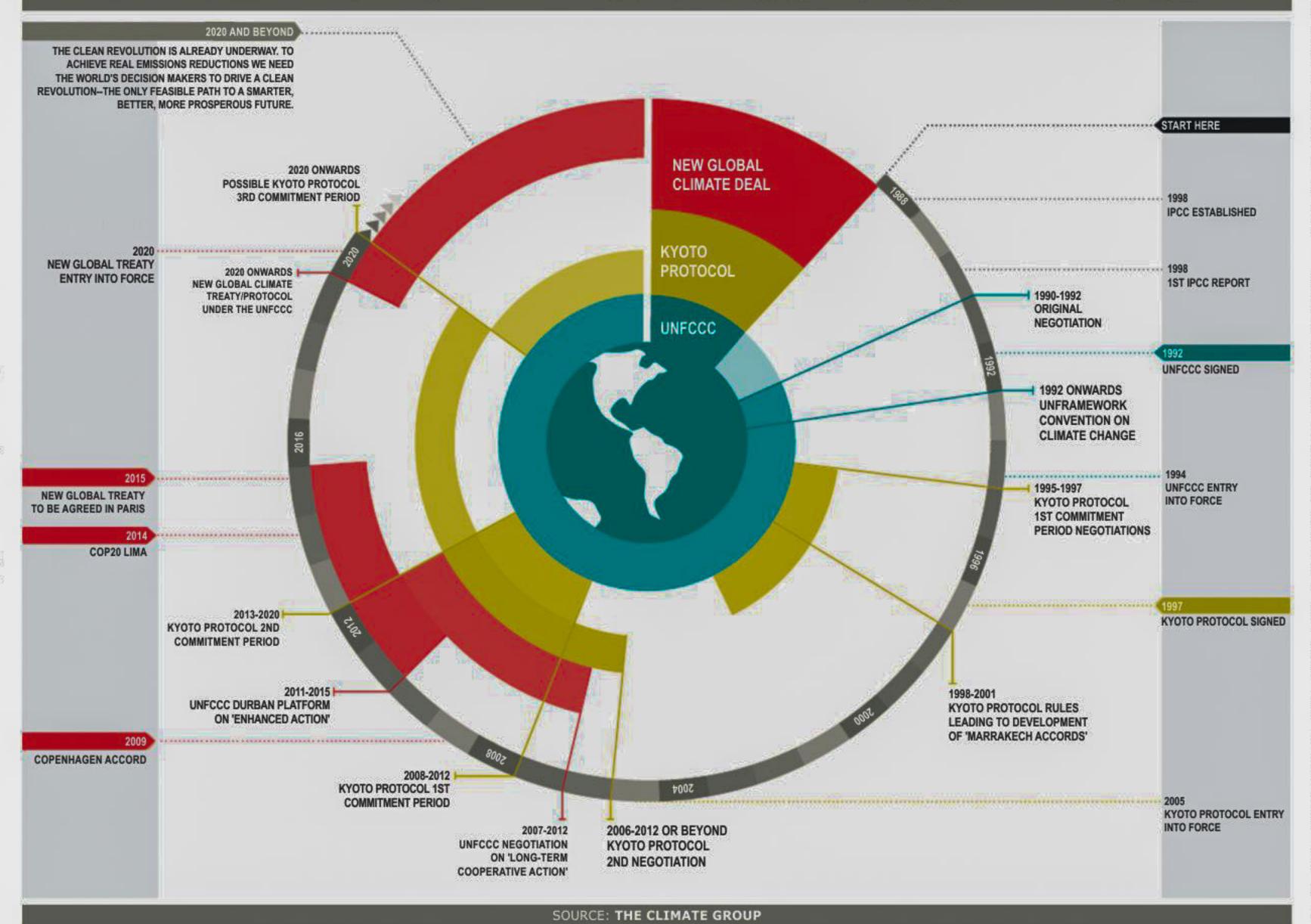
limate negotiations with tempestuous bargaining ended in Lima, 32 hours beyond the scheduled two weeks time. It's now time to reflect on the gestation, meaning and implications of the 43-page, 23-item document titled the Lima Call for Climate Action, that includes an Annex --'Elements of A Negotiating Text' -- for finalising an agreement in Paris in December 2015. Initial reactions to the Lima outcome range from 'an historic beginning of universal participation' in curbing emissions to moving from 'weak to weaker to weakest' over the last two decades.

Those viewing Lima in a positive way refer to the Kyoto Protocol's (KP) dichotomous distinction in emission reduction commitments between developed and developing countries. This truncated approach covered only a minor share of global emissions, represented mainly by the EU. The Lima agreement, as a follow-up from Durban, establishes a legal symmetry long sought by the US, which dubbed the KP as the 'Berlin Wall' and its topdown approach as not acceptable to the US Congress. Those who are negative about Lima's ultimate impact refer to utter lack of teeth in implementing such a broad-based bottom-up 'nationally-determined contributions' to global mitigation. Both these end-of-spectrum assessments perhaps contain elements of hard truth, depending on the lens one looks with. Is there a space in between?

Let me first try to dissect the body of the decision text. It seems Lima was mostly about flagging the issues for Paris, rather than reaching consensus on any of them, that held back success for so long.

First about mitigation ambition, which has three options for the UNFCCC Parties, all referring to limiting the temperature rise to 20/1.50C compared to pre-industrial level. Only one of them refers to the Climate Convention's cardinal principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibility based on respective capability. The options across the text refer to this principle 25 times, which remained omitted from the Copenhagen Accord down to Durban Platform, but insisted anew by the major developing country (MDC) emitters. This time the principle has been

A TIMELINE OF THE UNFCCC NEGOTIATIONS



modified in one option, as 'evolving CBDR,' perhaps to capture the rapidly changing contributions of MDCs to global emissions, and their growing economic power. But Paris will not succeed without resolving this issue of differentiation among major emitters -- Who will do What and How Much! Further, the decision language also saw a change from 'shall' in the existing climate regime to 'may' in terms of commitments. There is even no agreement on what to call national efforts -- as commitment, contribution or

action. The Ad-hoc Working Group

on Durban Platform will produce a

new text based on the Lima 'Ele-

ments' by May next year, for discussion at the inter-sessional in June in Bonn. The LDCs and small island developing states (SIDS) do not have compulsion to undertake mitigation, though they have been urged to strive toward a low GHG emission reduction path, with the provision of needed support.

Next, about the nature of mitigation efforts, called 'intended nationally-determined contributions' (INDC). In this bottom-up dispensation, countries will self-determine their goals, targets, even fairness in light of 'different national circumstances,' and submit to the UNFCCC Secretariat by first quarter of 2015, or by October 1 at the latest. They 'may' have quantifiable targets, but not as a compulsion. Then, by November 1, the Secretariat will prepare a report adding up all the INDCs to see the expected impact on limiting global temperature. There is neither any formal review nor any comparative assessment of INDCs. The president of COP20, Minister of Environment of Peru, eulogised this US-called 'buffet approach' as 'multilateral assessment.'

Let me recall the experience of the KP, where even with assuming internationally-binding commitments, some countries have just walked out, though it has compliance mechanism

and penalty provision! So, only someone living in fool's paradise may believe that any international oversight-less INDCs will have an impact on emissions reduction. Any kind of extra-national review is viewed as intrusive of state sovereignty, a lesson the major-emitter emerging powers have learnt perhaps from the US' past and present approach to international arrangements. In an age of global common problem, the comity of nations must learn to move away from the centuries-old Westphalian, cow-boyish values of protecting sovereignty to an enlightened global realpolitik optics to solve such extranational problems.

Next, what about adaptation, the life and state-saver to LDCs and SIDS? The draft text leaves many options open, from committing countries to cooperating in adaptation to putting it on equal footing with mitigation to setting an explicit global goal of adaptation. Although developing countries wanted a separate section on Loss and Damage, it was itemised as 'Adaptation and Loss and Damage.' Lima failed to elaborate on the Warsaw International Mechanism on this issue too. Finally, climate finance as the

second most vexing issue, after mitigation, did not see much progress except a commitment of \$10.2 billion for capitalisation of the Green Climate Fund, in which several developing countries also joined to contribute. This money in fact diluted the agenda of long term finance, of which mobilisation of \$100 billion a year by 2020 was a solemn pledge by the industrial countries. But Lima failed to devise any roadmap for the purpose. Against this paltry sum of \$10 billion, UNEP's recent assessment shows a yearly need of about half-atrillion dollar for adaptation. The LDC Fund, almost pauperised with its disbursed and approved amounts, has been totally overlooked. While climate finance, mostly repackaged ODA, goes up, traditional ODA goes down. So, where is additional money? Lima also failed to define climate finance, fix a process of monitoring its flow or any source of international public finance. This will not build trust across the fractious divides, vitally needed for upcoming talks.

Thus, I cannot afford to be optimistic about Paris. Lima was expected to untie some of the Gordian knots that kept holding us back for years. Instead, it just dumped everything on the table, in such disheveled shape! Paris is likely to remain hostage again to few old and new major emitters, together contributing about three-fourth of global emissions. The EU continues to remain on the right and fair side in most of these crunch issues. So Paris outcome depends on bridging the divides, an uphill task indeed.

The writer is Professor, Env Mgt, North South E-mail: mizanrk@northsouth.edu

claimed that his forces are taking action in

North Waziristan against all the good and

bad Taliban. Will Nawaz Sharif ask his army

chief to take action against those militants

who don't use the name of Taliban and who

Tragedy turning into strength

N December 17, Barack Obama made a bold and courageous announcement that the US would establish an embassy in Cuba and open negotiations to normalise its relations with the communist country, ending more than five decades of, at times, and terrifying Cold War politics.

In a speech at the White House the president urged Cubans and Americans to leave behind the "tyranny of both colonisation and communism." He said neither Cubans nor Americans were "well served by a rigid policy that's rooted in events that took place before most of us were born."

Last year, Obama authorised high level diplomatic talks with Cuba, which were hosted by Canada, and in his speech at the White House he thanked both Canada and the Vatican for facilitating talks with Cuba. President Obama and his Cuban counterpart Raul Castro spoke or the phone for about 45 minutes, the first presidential level communication between the two nations since the Cuban revolution in 1959.

Why did the president change the policy? There are several reasons, and some of them deserve mention. First, the US has been isolated from the Latin American countries on the Cuban policy and its traditional influence with them has been waning steadily. In 2012, at the Latin American summit, Obama faced a barrage of calls from Latin American leaders to admit Cuba into future summits. As a result of divisions over Cuba, the summit ended without a Joint Declaration signed by the 31 leaders in attendance, as also happened at the hemispheric meeting in 2009.

Second, China has emerged as a key economic and political player in Latin America as the US had shifted focus in the Middle East since 9/11. China's move to bring large-scale infrastructural projects to South America has been largely responsible for its recent success in the region. China's trade with the region has risen 50% in the past two years to roughly \$180 billion. The frequent visit of Chinese leaders to Latin American countries is evidence of China's consolidation of political and economic relationships with the Latin American countries, the backyard of the United States.

Third, given the growing presence of the US and Nato in Eastern Europe, Russia is similarly looking at ways to expand its presence in America's backyard as well. Russia has sought to build up its political presence and militarytechnical cooperation in Latin America. Putin visited many of the Latin American countries this year in July after the Ukrainian crisis and proposed the establishment of a Russian naval base on Nicaraguan territory, which could upset the balance of power in the region. Putin's offer to Nicaragua reportedly came only days after the Central American country announced plans to construct an Atlantic-

Pacific canal by 2020. The inter-ocean canal will compete with the Panama Canal, allowing large ships to transit through the region.

All these reasons seem to have motivated President Obama to normalise ties with Cuba to counter the growing Chinese and Russian economic, political and military power in

Latin America. For years, politicians have been wary of reestablishing ties with Cuba for fear of alienating the well-organised overwhelmingly conservative Cuban diaspora centered in Florida. But given the passage of time and the failure of the embargo some analysts believe the political danger has waned. Furthermore, second generation Cuban Americans are thought to be less supportive of the embargo than their parents' generation, many of whom lost everything when Cuban businesses were nationalised without compensation during the revolution.

Obama's announcement is seen as being consistent with the policy he hinted at six years ago when he said on January 21, 2008, presidential primary debate: "I will meet not just with our friends, but with our enemies because I remember what (President John F.) Kennedy said, that "we should never negotiate out of fear but we should 'never fear to negotiate." Before he leaves the White House, he will leave his legacy of dismantling the last vestige of the Cold War.

The writer is a former Bangladesh Ambassador to the UN,

Yesterday's answer

US RAPPROACHMENT WITH CUBA

Dismantling last vestige of Cold War

HAMID MIR

AKISTAN has been weeping since last Tuesday. We have wept many rivers of tears in just a few days. Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) announced it would organise more attacks the very next day after the brutal massacre. Taliban militants proudly released pictures of seven militants who killed 133 young students in Army Public School Peshawar, including their principal and some teachers, on December 16. TTP declared that "seven soldiers of Islam took the revenge of our children who were killed by the infidel army of Pakistan." Common Pakistanis are not ready to accept the justification given by TTP. They want quick action against those who gave a bad name not only to Pakistan but also to Islam. Sacrifice of young students is becoming a turning point in the history of Pakistan. This national tragedy at least forced the government and the opposition to form a united

front against terrorism. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif convened an All Parties Conference in Peshawar on December 17, which was attended by all the major political parties of right, left and centre. Liberal parties like PPP and ANP were surprised to see PTI Chief Imran Khan sitting next to Nawaz Sharif in this conference. These parties used to call Imran Khan 'Taliban Khan' due to his soft stance on the Taliban. A few months back, the Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaaf (PTI) government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province announced that they would provide a political office to the Taliban in Peshawar. But the black Tuesday of December 16 forced PTI and its ally Jamaat-i-Islami to join hands with all other political parties that want decisive action against terrorists.

Three important decisions were taken in the Peshawar meeting. PM Nawaz Sharif informed the meeting that his government would cease to discriminate between good and bad Taliban and would ensure the elimination of all terrorists. He also formed a committee headed by Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan to devise a plan in just one week for the elimination of terrorism. He also approved the removal of the moratorium on death penalty in terrorism cases.

The decisions of All Parties Conference in

are active in Punjab and Sindh provinces? The army chief rushed to Kabul on Wednesday and shared some evidence with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani about the mastermind of the Peshawar attack, who was reportedly operating from Eastern part of Afghanistan. Some Urdu newspapers are claiming that the mastermind of the Peshawar attack Mullah Fazalullah was getting money from Afghan and Indian intelligence but sane voices in media are demanding some credible evidence. I think that a baseless blame game at this point of time will destroy the public sympathy Pakistan got last Tuesday from all over the world. There is general consensus in Pakistan to bury the past policies of dictator General Ziaul Haq who had created private militias in the name of Islam. Will Imran Khan support any move to at least disarm all the private militias operating in different parts of the country in the name of Islam

and Pakistan?

evening of December 17. He called off his sit-in, which was started 126 days ago in front of the Parliament House in Islamabad to protest against rigging in the 2013 election. In the Peshawar meeting he assured Nawaz Sharif that his party would support a national plan of action to combat terrorism. The Peshawar tragedy is now turning into national strength for fighting terrorism. The whole world is standing with Pakistan. Common Pakistanis are pleasantly surprised that, from India and Bangladesh to US and Canada, the whole world is expressing solidarity with them. This is a golden opportunity not only for Pakistan but for the whole of South Asia to unite and strike the enemies of humanity without any distinction between good and bad. This is the right time for the leaders of

Imran Khan did one good thing on the

Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, terrorism incidents.

Nepal and Sri Lanka to sit together again and again, and formulate a joint strategy for combating terrorism. Let us stop our dirty double games with each other. Let us start playing fair with each other in the memory of all those innocents who lost their lives in



isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.



George **Bernard Shaw**

CROSSWORD by Thomas Joseph

2 Opera song

5 Not live

6 Eats into

10 Purpose

18 Declare

20 Yokel

21 Inkling

23 Carryall

7 Coal source

9 Writer Harper

16 Stage prompt

bowlers

22 Ticket half

Others"

30 Brewery sight

33 Network points

41 Eggs, to Caesar

34 Under the weather

19 Target for some

25 Hammer or sickle

29 Kidman of "The

3 Oil yielding tree

4 Caribou's cousin

8 Letter before omega

- Across 1 Clock part 5 House of worship
- 11 Vaccine type 12 Out of bed
- 13 Skating spot
- 14 -- up (paid)
- 15 Furning
- 16 Hand over
- 17 Magna cum--19 Greek x
- 22 Canyon of the comics 24 Solemn 26 Muscle quality
- 27 Formerly 28 Road reversal
- 30 Black Russian ingredient 31 Casino action
- 32 Counting everything
- 43 Despicable
- 44 Potato pancakes 45 Crumb carriers Down 1 Shape
- 34 Paisley person 35 Sense of self 38 Class length 41 Start the bidding 42 Source of wisdom
 - 36 Hanukkah gift 37 Addition column 38 Campaign pro 39 Memorable time 40 Scoundrel
- SLEET POLES LOTSA TRACKLIGHTS IAM NAT CASHEW CITE NEARS ACED OSCAR HEARS APSEONTIME ROMMOEGIS BLACKLIGHTS DOTHE IOT TOSS DO
- CRYPTOQUOTE L PHQLP YEKUSC PLMWGR LZ QHME OHTUR DGUS ZGUQ'EU SHZ RH WHHC, LSC RQAVLZGKBUR DKZG QHME VEHIPUAR DGUS ZGUQ'EU SHZ RH ILC. -- LESHPC G. WPLRWHD
- Yesterday's CRYPTOQUOTE: HALF THE TIMES WHEN MEN THINK THEY ARE TALKING -- E.W. HOWE **BUSINESS, THEY ARE WASTING TIME.**
- is used for the three L's, X for the two 0's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

LONGFELLOW

A XYDLBAAXR is

One letter stands for

another. In this sample, A

Peshawar were hailed all over Pakistan. But the question is, will Nawaz Sharif deliver? The writer works for Geo TV Pakistan and tweets at Army Chief General Sharif has already @HamidMirGeo