

COP29 finance draft reveals divided positions

AFP, Paris

The UN has published a draft on climate financing due to be presented at the COP29 in November, laying out the conflicting positions from which the main country blocs will try to clinch the next climate deal.

The document, which AFP consulted Friday, is the basis for negotiating an accord that is due to be reached at COP29 in Baku under Azerbaijan's presidency.

The "New collective quantified goal", or NCQG in UN jargon, is intended to replace the engagements made by developed countries to provide \$100 billion a year in financing to help developing countries face climate change.

The draft lays out seven rough options that summarise the opposing positions.

Arab countries say developed countries should commit at least \$441 billion a year in grants between 2025-2029 to mobilise loans and private financing that would bring the annual total to \$1.1 trillion.

African countries insist on an annual objective of \$1.3 trillion.

Over the past months, the donor countries -- which the Rio summit in 1992 identified as the United States, the European Union, Britain, Japan, Canada, Switzerland, Turkey, Norway, Iceland, New Zealand and Australia -- have said these amounts are unrealistic.

Arguing that they now account for less than 30% of historic emissions, they want to expand the list of donors to China and Gulf countries, who refuse to consider it.

The EU, while accepting that "developed country Parties continue to take the lead in mobilising climate finance from a wide variety of sources, instruments and channels", said the "collective goal can only be reached if Parties with high GHG-emissions and economic capabilities join the effort."

The EU wrote that all "global investment flows", public and private together, must reach at least \$1 trillion per year by 2035, without specifying the share that would come from rich countries -- a formulation close to that of the United States.

"We now only have 73 days before COP29 begins and Parties need to accelerate their engagement on this top negotiating priority to reach consensus," COP29 President-Designate Mukhtar Babayev said.



People protest calling for an end to the Israeli offensive in Gaza during a demonstration in solidarity with Palestinians in Dublin, Ireland, yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Deadly strikes hit Russian, Ukrainian border cities

Media investigation identifies 66,000 Russian soldiers killed in Ukraine

AFP, Kyiv

Aerial strikes on Russian and Ukrainian border cities killed at least a dozen people on Friday, bombardments that came as Kyiv dismissed its air force commander in a major military shake-up.

Both sides also claimed to have advanced on the battlefield -- Moscow in eastern Ukraine and Kyiv in its shock offensive into Russia's western Kursk region -- with the fighting showing no sign of subsiding, two and a half years into Russia's invasion.

A Russian aerial strike on the northeastern city of Kharkiv on Friday afternoon killed seven people, including a 14-year-old girl, Ukraine's interior minister said.

At least 77 were wounded, including 18 children, the emergency services said.

Another Russian strike yesterday killed two people and injured 10 more including children in a village in Ukraine's Kharkiv region, the governor said.

President Volodymyr Zelensky called on Kyiv's Western backers to up their support after the attack, which officials said was with a glide bomb.

"We need strong decisions from our partners to stop this terror," Zelensky said in a post on social media.

"We need long-range capabilities," he added, referring to Kyiv's appeals to allies to lift restrictions on the use of Western-supplied missiles inside Russian territory and deliver more longer-range weapons.

"We need the implementation of air defence agreements for Ukraine. This is about saving lives," he added.

Across the border some 60 kilometres (37 miles) to the north, Russia said

Ukraine had fired cluster munitions on the city of Belgorod and its suburbs, killing at least five and wounding 37 civilians, including at least six children.

"One woman and four men died of their wounds on the spot before an ambulance arrived," regional governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said in a post on Telegram.

Meanwhile, independent Russian media outlet Mediazona yesterday said according to its estimates more than 66,000 Russian military personnel have died during the war in Ukraine.

Mediazona has been drawing up a list of known soldier deaths in conjunction with the BBC Russian Service using open-source data.

Previously in April, they announced they had found more than 50,000 names of Russians killed.

Pacific bloc drops Taiwan to placate China anger

AFP, Nukualofa

A joint declaration by Pacific leaders was reissued yesterday morning with mentions of Taiwan removed after China slammed an earlier version as a "mistake" that "must be corrected".

After five days of talks in Tonga, a "cleared" communique was released Friday that reaffirmed a 30-year-old agreement allowing Taiwan to take part in the Pacific Islands Forum.

But the wording immediately raised the ire of Chinese diplomats, who piled pressure on Pacific leaders to amend the document.

The forum reissued the communique without explanation Saturday morning, conspicuously deleting the paragraph concerning the bloc's "relations with Taiwan".

The original paragraph -- titled "Relations with Taiwan/Republic of China" -- said leaders had "reaffirmed" the 1992 decision that paved the way for Taiwan's participation in the forum.

Beijing has aggressively sought to exclude Taiwan -- a self-governing island of more than 23 million people -- from international bodies and rejects its autonomy.

Brazil blocks X

AFP, Brasilia

A block on Elon Musk's X social network in Brazil started to take effect early yesterday after a Supreme Court judge ordered its suspension, according to AFP.

Brazilian Supreme Court judge Alexandre de Moraes on Friday ordered the suspension of the platform following a months-long standoff with the tech billionaire over disinformation in South America's largest nation.

Moraes handed down the ruling after Musk failed to comply with an order to name a new legal representative for the company.

Early yesterday access to X, formerly known as Twitter, was no longer possible for some users in the South American country.

Musk, who also owns Tesla and SpaceX, reacted with fury to the judge's order, branding Moraes an "evil dictator cosplaying as a judge" and accusing him of "trying to destroy democracy in Brazil."



Trump moves to contain fallout of abortion, IVF rows

AFP, Johnstown

Republican White House nominee Donald Trump sought Friday to contain the blast radius of a fierce backlash over his remarks publicly backing away from right-wing positions on reproductive rights.

The ex-president has been under fire from conservatives over an announcement that in a second term he would ensure free in vitro fertilization (IVF) -- an expensive fertility procedure that many in the anti-abortion movement want to see curbed.

The rift widened as he hit out at his home state Florida's six-week abortion ban, calling it too restrictive and suggesting he planned to vote for an upcoming ballot measure that would make the procedure legal until a fetus becomes viable.

Trump, 78, walked back the comment ahead of a rally in the battleground state of Pennsylvania



on Friday, telling Fox News that "I will be voting no."

But conservatives had already begun criticizing Trump's ever-shifting positions on abortion, with a new Republican policy platform dropping calls for a national ban and the tycoon's recent claim that his government would be "great" for reproductive rights.

The pushback from anti-abortion groups on his latest remarks was swift, with activists warning that he risks alienating his base.

Evangelical theologian Albert Mohler said Trump's positions

appeared "almost calculated to alienate pro-life voters" while conservative commentator Erick Erickson posted that Trump's abortion stance "will be a bridge too far for too many."

Trump's rally, in Johnstown, was notable for the absence of any remarks on reproductive rights, despite Thursday's big IVF announcement.

Almost every Senate Republican voted against assuring IVF access in a vote in June and more than half of the House Republican lawmakers have sponsored legislation that threatens its legality.

Republicans are divided on fertility treatments such as IVF, with many hailing them as a boost to American families.

Others, with strong beliefs that life begins at conception, oppose IVF because the procedure can produce multiple embryos, not all of which get used.

Mothers' fight to expose CIA's brainwash programme

AFP, Montreal

A group of Indigenous women are hoping to stop the bulldozers at a former Montreal hospital which they believe could hold the truth about children still missing from a grisly half-century-old CIA experiment.

They have spent the last two years trying to delay the construction project by McGill University and the Quebec government.

"They took our children and had all kinds of things done to them. They were experimenting on them," said Kahentimetha, an 85-year-old activist from the Mohawk community of Kahnawake, southwest of Montreal, who goes by just one name.

The activists are relying on archives and testimonies that suggest the site contains unmarked graves of children formerly interned at the Royal Victoria Hospital and Allan Memorial Institute, a neighboring psychiatric hospital.

In the 1950s and 1960s, behind the austere walls of the old psychiatric

institute, the US Central Intelligence Agency funded a human experiments program called MK Ultra.

During the Cold War, the program aimed to develop procedures and drugs to effectively brainwash people. Experiments were conducted in Britain, Canada and the United States, subjecting people -- including Indigenous children in Montreal -- to electroshocks, hallucinogenic drugs, and sensory deprivation.

"They wanted to erase us," said Kahentimetha.

A leading figure in the Indigenous rights movement who has traveled to Britain and the United States to denounce colonialism, she called this fight "the most important of (her) life."

"We want to know why they did this and who's going to take the blame for it," she said.

In the fall of 2022, the mothers obtained an injunction to suspend work on a new university campus and research center at the site -- a project worth Can\$870 million (US\$643 million).

Fellow activist Kwetio, 52, said they insisted on arguing the case themselves without lawyers, "because in our ways, no one speaks for us."

Last summer, sniffer dogs and specialized probes were brought in to search the property's expansive and dilapidated buildings. They managed to identify three areas of interest for excavations.

But, according to McGill and the government's Societe Quebecoise des Infrastructure (SQI), "no human remains have been discovered."

In recent years, Canada has opened its eyes to past atrocities.

Generations of Indigenous children were sent to residential schools where they were stripped of their language, culture and identities in what a 2015 truth and reconciliation report said amounted to "cultural genocide."

Between 1831 and 1996, some 150,000 Indigenous children were taken from their homes and placed in 139 such schools. Several thousand never returned to their communities.

Bangladesh

Tourism Board

National Tourism Organization

Bangladesh Tourism Board

(National Tourism Organisation)

Parjatan Bhaban (Level-9 & 10), West Agargoan, Dhaka-1207.

Invitation for Tender Notice

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism
2.	Procuring Entity Name	Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB)
3.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
4.	Invitation for	Store Rakes & Different types of maintenance work for Bangladesh Tourism Board
5.	Invitation Ref No	30.33.0000.111.69.001.24 - 437
KEY INFORMATION		
6.	Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (OTM)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
7.	Budget & Source of Funds	GOB
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
8.	Tender Publication Date	September 01, 2024
9.	Place, Last Date and Time of Selling Tender Documents	Research & Planning Section, Bangladesh Tourism Board Level-9 (Parjatan Bhaban), E-5 C/1, West Agargaon Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Administrative Area, Dhaka - 1207 September 15, 2024; Time: 5:00 pm.
10.	Last Date and Time of Submission of Tender Documents	Date: September 16, 2024; Time: 1:00 pm.
11.	Tender Opening Date and Time	September 16, 2024; Time: 2:30 pm.
12.	Place of Submission	Office of the Chief Executive Officer Bangladesh Tourism Board Level-9, Parjatan Bhaban, West Agargoan, Sher e Banglanagar (Administrative Area), Dhaka-1207
13.	Place of Opening	Office of the Chief Executive Officer Bangladesh Tourism Board Level-9, Parjatan Bhaban, West Agargoan, Sher e Banglanagar (Administrative Area), Dhaka-1207
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
14.	Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	a) 5 (Five) Years' Experience as Supplier. b) Credit Line/Liquid asset of Minimum BDT 20 (Twenty) Lac c) At least 3 (Three) similar contracts as Supplier. d) Updated Trade License as Supplier/Producer/Importer (2024-2025) e) VAT Registration Certificate. f) Updated Income Tax Certificate (till 2023-24 tax years). g) Audited Financial Report of last 3 (three) years. (2023, 2022, 2021) h) Other Conditions as specified in TOR and PPR-2008.
15.	Brief Description of Supply	Store Rakes & Different types of maintenance work.
16.	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	Tk. 1000/- (One thousand) Non-Refundable
17.	Tender Security	Tk. 50,000/- (Fifty Thousand) Taka in the form of Pay Order in favour of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Bangladesh Tourism Board.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
18.	Name & Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Mazharul Islam, Deputy Director (Research & Planning) Bangladesh Tourism Board Level-9, Parjatan Bhaban, West Agargoan, Sher e Banglanagar (Administrative Area), Dhaka-1207
The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject any or all tenders or annul the Tender proceedings without assigning any reason.		

Sd/-
(Md. Mazharul Islam)
Deputy Director (Research & Planning)
Bangladesh Tourism Board

GD- 301