

## Baku Climate Change Conference Monday, 11 November 2024

The 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 29) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) ground to halt a mere hour after its launch, with the opening plenary suspended to allow for additional consultations on the meeting agendas. Resumption of the plenary was pushed back several times, leaving delegates idle for most of the day. Eventually, all agendas were adopted and parties even adopted a decision on the Paris Agreement's Article 6.4 Mechanism.

### Welcome Remarks

COP 28 President Sultan Al Jaber opened the meeting, emphasizing the need to “unite, act, and deliver.” He called on all parties who can, to contribute to the capitalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, and urged delivering a robust new collective quantified goal (NCQG) on climate finance.

COP 29 President Mukhtar Babayev emphasized that COP 29 is an “unmissable moment” and urged delivering a fair and ambitious NCQG, which sends a strong signal to financial markets. He outlined how operationalizing carbon markets under Paris Agreement Article 6 can help reduce the costs of implementing nationally determined contributions (NDCs). He further underscored that the next round of NDCs should be informed by the outcome of the first Global Stocktake (GST), including with regard to transitioning away from fossil fuels in a just and orderly manner, taking into account national circumstances, pathways, and approaches. “COP 29 cannot and will not be silent on mitigation,” Babayev remarked, pointing to Action Agenda calls on energy grids and methane emissions from organic waste. He additionally recalled that parties are expected to submit their first biennial transparency reports (BTRs) by the end of 2024 and have national adaptation plans in place by 2025.

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell stressed that “climate finance is not charity,” but is in the self-interest of all parties: “If two thirds of the world’s nations cannot afford to cut emissions, every nation pays the price.” Acknowledging that a single COP cannot deliver the full transformation that is needed, he emphasized the need to accelerate the shift to clean energy and climate resilience. He noted the importance of measuring progress

on adaptation and underscored that BTRs will help to avoid “making decisions in the dark.”

### Procedural Matters

**Rules of Procedure:** Parties agreed to apply the draft rules of procedure (FCCC/CP/1996/2), except draft rule 42 on voting. The COP 29 Presidency will hold consultations.

**Adoption of the Agendas:** President Babayev reported on the pre-session consultations that stretched into the early morning hours of the opening day and continued for more than seven hours after the meeting’s opening ceremony. He proposed to adopt the supplementary provisional agendas without the agenda items suggested for inclusion by parties, with the understanding that the Presidency would convene consultations on:

- mountains, with a high-level event to be organized by the Presidency at COP 29;
- the special needs and circumstances of Africa;
- the seventh review of the Financial Mechanism; and
- climate-related trade-restrictive unilateral measures, in coordination with the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs).

With regard to the COP 29 agenda, President Babayev further noted that the Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer would be discussed under the SBI and the Presidency will undertake consultations on any outstanding matters in the second week. The proposals for amendments to the Convention and on the second review of the adequacy of Convention Article 4.2(a–b) will be held in abeyance.

With regard to the agenda of the sixth COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 6), President Babayev proposed to retain the item on the dialogue on GST implementation under matters relating to finance, while adding a footnote indicating that the placement of this sub-item on the agenda does not prejudice the scope of consultations on the matter under the SBI. The EU, ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES (AOSIS), UMBRELLA GROUP, ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY GROUP (EIG), LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCs), and INDEPENDENT ALLIANCE OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (AILAC), accepted the proposal, but expressed their misgivings about attempts to

limit the focus of the dialogue on GST implementation to finance. Most parties underlined that all mandates of the GST decision must be carried forward and reiterated their understanding that adequate space will be provided during CMA 6 for these discussions. The LIKE MINDED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (LMDCs), AFRICAN GROUP, and ARAB GROUP underlined that the focus of the dialogue on GST implementation is finance, and lamented efforts by some parties to renegotiate agreed outcomes. The LMDCs stressed the dialogue must focus on financial support from developed to developing countries, and on tracking delivery of the NCQG.

BRAZIL, SOUTH AFRICA, INDIA, and CHINA (BASIC) expressed their readiness to work with the Presidency to achieve a collaborative and cooperative outcome. The AFRICAN GROUP called for the SBs to consider the work of the Advisory Board of the Santiago Network, highlighting governance concerns.

Parties agreed to remove matters that will be considered in Presidency consultations from the respective supplementary provisional agendas and to renumber the remaining agenda items accordingly. They adopted:

- the COP supplementary provisional agenda (FCCC/CP/2024/1/Add.2);
- the CMP supplementary provisional agenda (FCCC/KP/CMP/2024/1/Add.1), ;
- the CMA provisional agenda (FCCC/PA/CMA/2024/1/Add.1), with the footnote on the placement of the dialogue on GST implementation;
- the SBI agenda (FCCC/SBI/2024/15/Add.1), with an additional agenda item on the provision of financial and technical support related to reporting and review under article 13 of the Paris Agreement;
- the SBSTA supplementary agenda (FCCC/SBSTA/2024/8/Add.1).

**Organization of work under the COP:** Contact groups will convene on:

- long-term finance;
- the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF);
- the report of, and guidance to, the Green Climate Fund (GCF);
- the report of, and guidance to, the Global Environment Facility (GEF);
- the report of, and guidance to, the Loss and Damage Fund;
- arrangements between the COP, CMA, and the Loss and Damage Fund Board;
- the periodic review of the long-term global goal under the Convention and of overall progress towards achieving it.

Presidency consultations will convene on:

- dates and venues of future sessions;
- the COP's authority and guidance over the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM);
- the seventh review of the Financial Mechanism; and
- decision-making in the UNFCCC process.

**Organization of work under the CMA:** Contact groups will convene on:

- the Work Programme under the Framework for Non-market Approaches referred to in Paris Agreement Article 6.8;
- the NCQG;
- matters relating to the SCF;
- the report of, and guidance to, the GCF;
- the report of, and guidance to, the GEF;
- the report of, and guidance to, the Loss and Damage Fund;
- arrangements between the COP, the CMA, and the Board of the Loss and Damage Fund;
- matters relating to the Adaptation Fund;
- the dialogue on the scope of Paris Agreement Article 2.1(c) and its complementarity with Article 9;
- the report on doubling the collective provision of adaptation finance; and
- the technology implementation programme.

Informal consultations will convene on:

- the report on the annual GST dialogue;
- further guidance on features of NDCs; and
- matters relating to the committee to facilitate implementation and promote compliance.

The CMA forwarded the remaining agenda items to the SBs. Upon the SBs' closing plenaries, the CMA President will propose modalities of work for the second week of the conference.

**Organization of work under the CMP:** Contact groups will convene on matters relating to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and matters relating to the Adaptation Fund. President Babayev reported that views on the report on the high-level ministerial roundtable on increased ambition of Kyoto Protocol commitments remain divergent and parties agreed to further Presidency consultations.

**Organization of work under the SBs:** Joint informal consultations will convene on:

- procedural and logistical elements of the overall GST process;
- matters relating to the Global Goal on Adaptation;
- report of the Adaptation Committee;
- review of the progress, effectiveness, and performance of the Adaptation Committee;
- 2024 review of the WIM;
- the mitigation ambition and implementation work programme;
- the joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security; and
- the joint annual report of the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network.

Joint contact groups will convene on: the joint annual report of the WIM Executive Committee (ExCom) and the Santiago Network; the just transition work programme; and the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures.

The AFRICAN GROUP sought clarification that parties will be able to consider the decisions of the Advisory Board of the Santiago Network. The SBSTA Chair confirmed that the Board's

decisions are part of the Joint Annual Report of the WIM ExCom and Santiago Network, and that all elements of the report can be considered by parties.

The SBI agreed to convene a contact group on administrative, financial, and institutional matters, and deferred the consideration of matters relating to the Adaptation Fund to SBI 62.

The SBI and SBSTA respectively agreed to convene informal consultations on all their remaining substantive items.

**Admission of Observers:** The COP agreed to admit all listed observers and took note of organizations that changed their names (FCCC/CP/2024/2).

### Substantive Matters

**Reports of the Subsidiary Bodies:** The Co-Chairs of the 2024 Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue reported on the outcomes of the dialogue convened during SB 60 and highlighted the recommendation for parties to include ocean-based mitigation and adaptation action in their NDCs.

**Report of, and guidance to, the Loss and Damage Fund:** The Co-Chairs of the Loss and Damage Fund Board reported that the Board has completed all the tasks mandated by the COP and CMA to date. They celebrated that the Fund is fully operational and stands ready to work with contributors to turn pledges into contribution agreements.

**Rules, Modalities, and Procedures for the Mechanism established by Paris Agreement Article 6.4:** President Babayev introduced draft decision FCCC/PA/CMA/2024/L.1, which, *inter alia*, “takes note” of the Article 6.4 Supervisory Body’s adoption of two standards (on [methodologies](#) and on [removals](#)) that operationalize the Article 6.4 Mechanism. He assured parties that work on Article 6.4 would continue in contact group discussions and invited delegates to embrace the decision, which was adopted.

TUVALU noted discomfort with adopting decisions at the opening plenary without prior consultations by the governing bodies and expressed concern that the decision does not reflect the Paris Agreement’s party-driven process.

**Final Compilation and Accounting Reports for the Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol:** The CMP took note of the [reports](#) and concluded consideration of this agenda item. Later, BRAZIL, supported by CHINA, requested clarity on what was decided under this sub-item, calling for informal consultations. President Babayev said that the Presidency would provide a space for discussions.

**Report of the Compliance Committee of the Kyoto Protocol:** The CMP took note of the Committee’s ninth annual report (FCCC/KP/CMP/2024/2).

**Report of the administrator of the international transaction log under the Kyoto Protocol:** The SBI recommended that CMP take note of the report contained in FCCC/KP/CMP/2024/5.

**Research and Systematic Observation:** The COMMITTEE ON OBSERVATION SATELLITES (COS) and COORDINATION GROUP FOR METEOROLOGICAL SATELLITES (CGMS) presented their annual reports, calling satellites “vital tools” to

understand the planet. They highlighted the ability to pinpoint high methane leaks from oil and gas facilities.

### In the Corridors

The Baku Climate Change Conference opened under a proverbial cloud (the venue’s lack of windows made it difficult for anyone to see if there were actual clouds). Making their way through the venue, people milled about, discussing “how, not whether” the US election would affect climate cooperation. In a press conference, US President Biden’s Senior Advisor for International Climate Policy gave all the reassurances he could that a change of course in the country’s federal administration does not mean the private sector or local administrations will halt efforts toward clean energy expansion. “Very déjà-vu,” noted an observer who remembered the turmoil following Trump’s first election. “He is right that the fight against climate change is bigger than one political cycle,” noted an observer, “but this is the cycle that counts to keep 1.5°C in reach.”

After the glossy opening ceremony with inspirational videos, the meeting ground to a halt because parties could not adopt the agendas. It was not for lack of effort. Heads of delegation were at the venue until 3:00 am on Monday morning. Some thought they were close to an agreement. Evidently, they were not.

What held up most of the day was that parties could not agree on how to follow up on the first Global Stocktake (GST). The GST established a dialogue on implementing the GST outcomes. These are many and wide-ranging, including a call for all parties to contribute to energy transition efforts. The dialogue was established within the finance section of the GST decision, but there is a debate about its scope. Is it about the provision of finance to implement the GST? Or, is it about tracking the implementation of the GST decision more generally? Delegates could not agree on this paragraph’s “origin story” and, therefore, could not find agreement on a way forward. The Presidency shuttled between bilateral meetings with coalitions and parties throughout the day, testing parties’ flexibility to support placing the dialogue under finance, with a footnote that this placement does not prejudice the scope of the dialogue.

Many thought the conference should start by adopting the agendas provisionally, while discussions continued on this one point. That’s what happened at a previous meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies, after all. But, others hinted that this was unacceptable, although accounts varied regarding who it was unacceptable to. Fingers pointed in different directions, spreading the blame for the delay.

In the evening, parties ultimately reached an agreement: The footnote on the GST dialogue made its way onto the agenda and most agenda items proposed for consideration by parties will be taken up in Presidency consultations. Still, the afternoon was lost, in what the COP 29 President called an “unmissable moment” to catalyze climate ambition.



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