

Climate talks stumble as Paris summit looms

October 23 2015, by Marlowe Hood



Climate negotiators remain divided on how to tackle global warming and who should foot the bill

Climate negotiators divided on how to tackle global warming—and who should foot the bill—grappled Friday on the final day of crunch talks to finalise a draft agreement ahead of a crucial UN summit.

After four days of haggling in the German city of Bonn, this is the final negotiating day before heads of state and government arrive in Paris for a November 30-December 11 conference tasked with sealing the deal.

A deep divide between rich and [developing nations](#), and a botched attempt to streamline procedure, have left many diplomats frustrated.

Representing the G77 group of more than 130 developing nations, South Africa's [climate](#) negotiator Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko expressed the bloc's "profound dissatisfaction" at a meeting on Friday morning.

"You cannot wish the Group away, we are not an inconvenience to be ignored," she told the two facilitators of the 195-nation talks.

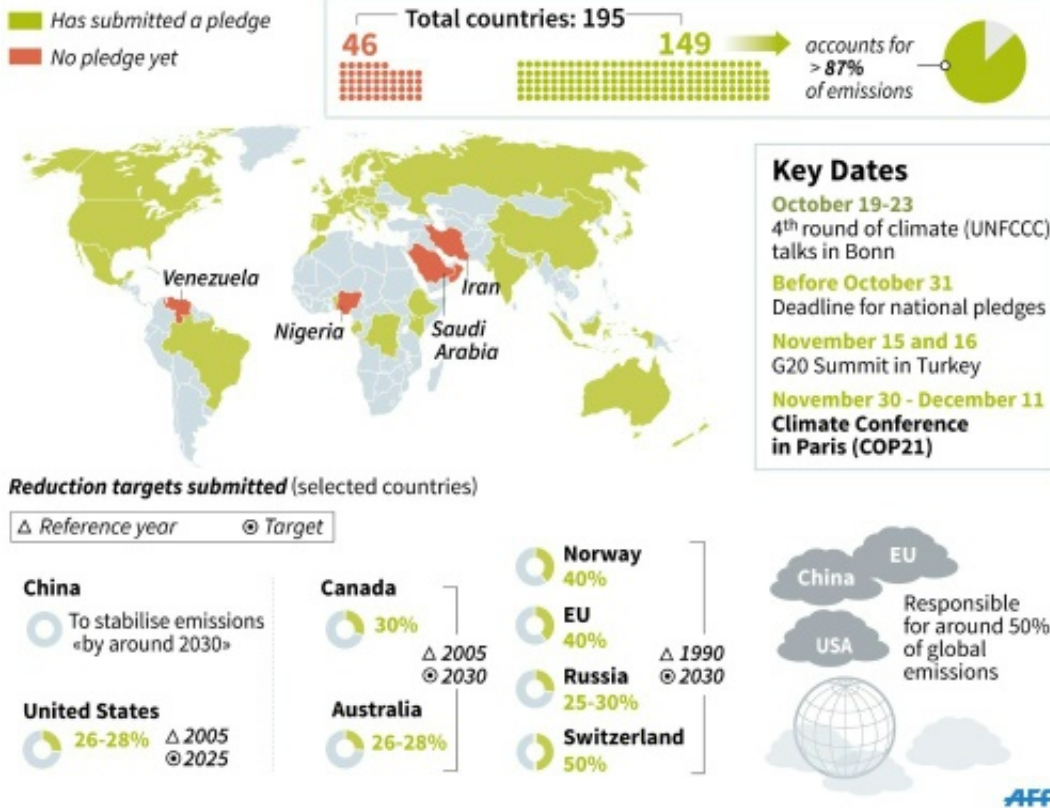
"G77 and China will not be sidelined."

Analysts said there has been little progress at the key talks.

A draft text, after last-minute additions by many countries, "contains a lot of substance," said Martin Kaiser, head of international climate politics for Greenpeace International. "But process-wise it's a nightmare."

Deletions and insertions into the draft have "delayed the process for several days if not the entire week," he added.

Greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets



Details of pledges on reducing greenhouse gas emissions

The Paris pact would be the first to unite all the world's nations in a single arena for reining in global warming and helping vulnerable nations cope with its impact.

"The most difficult issues remain the same as before," the European Union's top climate negotiator, Elina Bardram, told AFP on Thursday, summing up the first four days.

After more than two decades of negotiations, she said, it still boils down to one fundamental disagreement: "How do you divide responsibilities between developed and developing countries?"

As negotiators bickered, US scientists reported Thursday that the first nine months of 2015 had been the warmest on record worldwide.

Voluntary national pledges to reduce greenhouse emissions have gone part of the way towards the UN goal of capping warming at two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above the mid-19th century benchmark.

Bargaining chips

But how to fill the remaining "emissions gap" remains highly contentious, with developing countries reluctant to set more ambitious goals unless rich nations provide guarantees of finance.

That money would go towards easing their transition away from cheap and abundant coal to cleaner energy, and for shoring up defences against the impact of [climate change](#).



US scientists say the first nine months of 2015 was the warmest on record worldwide

Money, said negotiators and observers, remains the most obstinate hurdle.

A promise made at a tumultuous 2009 [climate summit](#) in Copenhagen to provide \$100 billion (90 billion euros) in annual assistance to developing nations from 2020 was devoid of detail.

How much will be for curbing emissions and how much for boosting resilience? Can the money be from grants or loans, or the private sector? All these points remain undecided.

"We shouldn't be waiting for a miracle on finance here," France's climate ambassador Laurence Tubiana said of the talks in Bonn.



Analysts say there has been little progress at the climate talks in Bonn

The job of negotiators in the former West German capital is to provide a manageable framework for ministers and top leaders to work out political compromises to give the final pact teeth.

Historically, this only happens at the 11th hour of climate conferences, if at all.

"Parties are still holding back their bargaining chips," Kaiser told AFP.

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