

The 11 countries that haven't made pledges for climate deal

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Nicaragua's Private Secretary Minister for National Policies Dr. Paul Oquist Kelley speaks during an interview as part of the COP21, United Nations Climate Change Conference, in Paris, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015. (AP Photo/Francois Mori)

Some are at war, others recovering from natural disasters and some are simply ideologically opposed to the climate deal taking shape in U.N. talks outside Paris.

Only 11 countries haven't submitted pledges for the envisioned agreement, including conflict-ridden Syria, reclusive North Korea and socialist Latin American countries who say it's up to the West to clean up the world's carbon pollution.

"Those who caused the problem need to solve the problem," said Paul Oquist, Nicaragua's U.S.-born [climate](#) envoy.

U.N. officials say they have received pledges covering 184 of the 195 countries that are parties to the U.N. convention on climate change, representing nearly all of the world's [carbon emissions](#). (The U.N. counts the European Union as a separate party in addition to its 28 members so the total number of parties is 196).

Even though the proposed targets collectively don't add up to what scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous levels of warming, the fact that so many countries, including some of the poorest, have made pledges represents a sea-change in the U.N. talks, which previously only asked rich countries to take action against [climate change](#).

Nicaragua is among the holdouts. While rapidly expanding renewable energy at home, the Central American nation refuses to submit a target in the international talks, arguing that the current approach of letting countries decide themselves how much to cut climate-warming carbon emissions won't work.



Youths of China Youth Climate Action Network participate to a demonstration march at the Climate Generations Areas as part of the COP21, United Nations Climate Change Conference, in Paris, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015. (AP Photo/Francois Mori)

"The approach that will work is historic responsibility," Oquist told The Associated Press, calling for a system that would compel rich nations that have polluted the atmosphere since the industrial revolution to make much deeper cuts than they have promised so far.

Others have skipped the climate pledges for different reasons.

North Korea is isolated from the rest of the world and doesn't actively participate in the climate talks. Syria is in the midst of a devastating civil war. Libya remains violent and unstable after the uprising against dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011. Nepal, normally a keen participant

in the U.N. climate talks, is recovering from a powerful earthquake earlier this year.

"Yes, there are a few countries left," U.N. Assistant Secretary-General Janosz Pastor told the AP. "Some of them are in war situations. Some others, for whatever national reasons, have not been able to complete their work."

U.N. agencies have helped dozens of developing countries prepare their climate action plans. Of the more than 40 countries getting help from the U.N. Development Program, only East Timor wasn't able to get their pledge in on time, said Yamil Bonduki, a UNDP official who has been involved in that effort.

The biggest countries not to present pledges yet are Uzbekistan and Venezuela, a major oil producer which often blasts the West for not doing more to fight global warming. On Thursday, Venezuela's minister of eco-socialism, Guillermo Barreto, said the country is withholding its pledge until it knows what commitments wealthy countries will put down in the agreement.

"We reserve our right to submit it after we know how will be the outcome of this conference," he told reporters on the sidelines of the Paris talks.

The other countries that haven't presented pledges are Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis and Tonga, U.N. officials say.

Some [countries](#) have done so against all odds. Afghanistan presented a climate pledge despite years of internal conflict. One of the latest submissions came from Niue, a poor Pacific island nation with just over 1,000 people. It pledged to boost [renewable energy](#) to 80 percent of its electricity generation by 2025, providing it gets international assistance.

"On the whole this has been an amazing, very positive development,"
Pastor said.

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