



**Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to
the Paris Agreement**
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Second annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition

Informal note by the President

Summary

This informal note, prepared by the President of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement with the support of the secretariat, is a non-exhaustive summary of the second annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition, held during the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties.

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA) at its fourth session decided to convene, as part of the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme, an annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition, beginning at the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement.¹ The first annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition was held at CMA 5, in the United Arab Emirates, on 3 December 2023.²

B. Context

2. The Presidency of the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) convened the second annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition, which took place on 18 November 2024 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. during COP 29.³ A summary of the proceedings can be found in the annex.

3. The round table facilitated a focused exchange of views, information and ideas among participants with the goal of providing direction to and recommendations for the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme, including with regard to how the work programme can better support countries in addressing challenges related to achieving long-term climate and sustainable development objectives.

4. The round table was attended by over 500 high-level representatives of Parties, including ministers, deputy ministers, climate envoys, heads of delegation and delegates, as well as representatives of non-governmental organization constituencies and observers. It was co-chaired by Yoko Alender, Minister of Climate of Estonia, and Kerryne James, Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy of Grenada.

5. The discussions during the round table were guided by the following questions:

- (a) How can Parties advance their just transition pathways in the context of the preparation and implementation of the next round of nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs)? How can international cooperation and support on the full range of means of implementation assist Parties to advance their just transition pathways in the context of NDCs and NAPs?
- (b) What are the expectations of Parties with regard to the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme and how can it serve as an effective tool for assisting Parties in further defining and implementing their climate plans in the context of just transition pathways that promote sustainable development and poverty eradication?

II. Summary

6. The following summary provides a non-exhaustive overview of the key messages that emerged from the discussions during the round table. It is without prejudice to the different views expressed.

7. **No ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach.** Parties emphasized that there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to just transitions, noting that just transition pathways are context-specific and

¹ Decision 1/CMA.4, para. 53.

² See <https://unfccc.int/event/first-annual-high-level-ministerial-round-table-on-just-transition>.

³ Further information is available at <https://unfccc.int/event/second-annual-high-level-ministerial-round-table-on-just-transition-mandated-event>.

will differ from country to country. Many Parties underscored that just transitions require careful consideration of different national priorities, needs, abilities and circumstances.

8. **Holistic, people-centric and whole-of-society approaches.** Many Parties emphasized the importance of adopting holistic, people-centric and whole-of-society approaches to just transitions. Many Parties highlighted the importance of just transition pathways that prioritize the health and well-being of all individuals and communities while ensuring that the associated social and environmental impacts avoid exacerbating existing inequalities for vulnerable communities. Several Parties underscored that multi-level governance is key and that just transitions must include all relevant stakeholders, including workers, employers, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth and marginalized groups. Many Parties highlighted that broad consultations and open, constructive and inclusive social dialogue with all social partners are essential for designing equitable, locally owned, context-appropriate and practical solutions that ensure no one is left behind in the transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient societies. Some Parties identified people-centric approaches as essential for maximizing the social and economic benefits of just transitions and improving the well-being of current and future generations.

9. **Multi-sectoral and whole-of-economy approaches.** Parties highlighted the need for multi-sectoral, whole-of-economy approaches to just transitions. Many Parties outlined that such approaches should involve promoting the use and development of green technologies, ensuring the economic diversification of sectors and industries and supporting the reskilling and upskilling of workers. Several Parties underscored differing national circumstances, stressing that just transitions must not focus solely on individual sectors but should encompass the entire economy and create synergies between mitigation, adaptation and sustainable development to achieve fair, long-term outcomes for all. Some Parties also mentioned the impact of unilateral measures and international trade barriers on countries' economies, with these measures and barriers representing obstacles to developing countries' paths to sustainable development and a just transition. Other Parties highlighted the connection between pursuing efforts to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5 °C and pursuing just transition pathways. Some Parties emphasized the importance of understanding and maximizing the socioeconomic benefits of just transitions, including those associated with transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems.

10. **Creating green and decent jobs and empowering the workforce.** Several Parties highlighted the importance of creating green, decent jobs for achieving just transitions, emphasizing the need for adaptive education systems as well as reskilling and upskilling programmes designed to prepare workers for emerging green industries. Parties outlined that fostering social dialogue and ensuring fair working conditions, including ensuring that labour rights are respected, are critical to mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of a transition. Some Parties mentioned the need to integrate green job creation into national climate strategies, including NDCs and NAPs, in order to align workforce development with climate goals.

11. **Expanding the concept of workforce.** Several Parties emphasized that just transition pathways should not only focus on the formal workforce but also cover the informal sector, unpaid care work, unemployed people and the workers of tomorrow. Parties widely acknowledged the need to ensure that these groups and their needs are included in just transition strategies, noting that the workforce of tomorrow will include those who are currently outside the formal economy. Parties mentioned ensuring access to social protections, decent work opportunities and new skills training for these groups as vital for a fair and inclusive transition.

12. **Leaving no one behind.** Some Parties emphasized that just transition pathways present a critical opportunity for preventing the deepening of inequalities entrenched in high-carbon economies. These Parties stressed the importance of ensuring that the shift to low-carbon and climate-resilient societies does not reproduce injustices of the past but instead fosters an inclusive economy that addresses social and economic disparities. Many Parties highlighted the potential of the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme to facilitate the integration of the principles of justice, equity and fairness into climate action and into domestic and international policies. Some Parties highlighted the importance of considering energy poverty, including measures to enhance access to clean and affordable

energy and food security in the context of just transitions.

13. **Respecting, promoting and considering human rights.** Many Parties underlined the importance of prioritizing respecting, promoting and considering human rights obligations in the development of just transition policies for ensuring that just transitions do not have adverse effects on vulnerable communities and leave no one behind. In particular, Parties highlighted the importance of strengthening ways of ensuring that labour rights, gender equality, women's empowerment, disability rights, Indigenous Peoples' rights and intergenerational equality are respected, promoted and considered in the context of just transitions.

14. **Integrating just transition pathways into NDCs, NAPs and other national climate plans.** Parties emphasized the need to mainstream just transition considerations in NDCs, NAPs and other national climate plans. Many Parties stated that the next round of NDCs should include specific measures that address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of climate action, ensuring that equity and fairness are integral components of climate action. Several Parties highlighted the role of the first global stocktake in informing and guiding the next round of NDCs, noting that the outcomes of the stocktake should serve as a basis for enhancing ambition and accelerating the implementation of just transition strategies.

15. **Adaptation.** Numerous Parties highlighted the importance of including adaptation in just transition pathways, including through measures that focus on strengthening climate resilience and increasing adaptive capacities such as through resilient infrastructure. Some Parties stressed the importance of indicators in this context, which they regarded as critical for measuring progress in enhancing climate resilience and ensuring sustainable development. Several Parties underscored that just transition pathways can enable higher ambition for accelerating both adaptation and mitigation action, as well as facilitate the integration of adaptation efforts into mitigation strategies, with a view to ensuring a balanced approach to climate action that reduces climate change risks while fostering sustainable development.

16. **Loss and damage.** Some Parties stressed that just transition pathways must include measures for responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, especially in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, such as small island developing States and the least developed countries. Several Parties highlighted the importance of ensuring that those that are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts, especially vulnerable communities, receive the necessary support, including financial assistance, technological solutions and capacity-building, for responding to loss and damage and better coping with climate change impacts.

17. **Scaling up means of implementation.** Several Parties mentioned significant barriers to implementing just transition pathways, including constrained fiscal space, limited access to affordable capital, debt burdens and lack of green technologies and data. In this context, many Parties called for scaling up the provision of means of implementation, including (1) predictable, accessible and adequate financial support; (2) green technology transfer to enable developing countries to adopt sustainable practices and improve resilience to climate change impacts; and (3) capacity-building support for facilitating equitable and sustainable transitions.

18. **Scaling up climate finance.** Many Parties reflected on the importance of mobilizing climate finance in the context of pursuing just transition pathways, with some highlighting the importance of aligning financial flows with the aim of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. Some Parties highlighted the importance of facilitating access to finance for developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, while some emphasized that climate finance should be commensurate with the mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage needs of developing countries. Some Parties stressed the importance of ensuring that international climate finance and associated instruments do not exacerbate debt burdens and fiscal constraints in developing countries, but rather support those countries in pursuing just transitions pathways. Several Parties mentioned that it is necessary to be able to mobilize additional, predictable and adequate climate finance at a manageable cost and to increase

grant funding and capital investment.

19. **Strengthening international cooperation.** Parties identified international cooperation as essential for supporting countries in transitioning their economies towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. Many Parties emphasized the importance of creating partnerships for ensuring that vulnerable communities are not left behind in just transitions, for facilitating the sharing of knowledge and across borders and thus fostering understanding, and for developing solutions that enable the implementation of just transition pathways. Some Parties mentioned the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme as a critical vehicle for enhancing international cooperation. Several Parties stressed that international cooperation should address systemic inequalities in access to resources and opportunities, with a focus on ensuring that climate action does not penalize developing countries and instead ensures the fair distribution of the costs and benefits of just transition pathways.

20. **Mainstreaming just transition in international frameworks.** Several Parties highlighted the need to facilitate collaboration across governments, the private sector and civil society in order to ensure an inclusive, transparent and equitable transition. Some Parties stated that, beyond pledges, there is a need for mechanisms in order to ensure the provision of predictable, accessible finance and technical assistance. Many Parties underscored the urgency of pursuing just transitions and some suggested mainstreaming just transition strategies in international frameworks in order to foster the exchange of information on best practices, challenges, opportunities and actionable solutions related to accelerating the implementation of effective climate action. Parties highlighted the vital role of international organizations and institutions in providing countries with the tools, resources and frameworks necessary for achieving their transition goals.

21. **Developing a guidance framework.** Some Parties proposed creating a repository of best practices to support the sharing of knowledge and strategies that promote equitable outcomes across all regions and communities. Several Parties suggested the development, through a Party-driven process, of a just transition guidance framework for integrating the principles of equity and fairness into the implementation of climate action under and outside the UNFCCC process and at the domestic and international level.

22. **Messages for the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme.** Parties highlighted that the work programme should focus on fostering real action and tangible outcomes. Some Parties reflected on the potential of the work programme to contribute to integrating consideration of justice, equity and fairness into climate action and the importance of both the domestic and international dimensions, with some Parties reflecting on the potential to adopt a road map or guidance framework for the work programme in this regard. Some Parties reflected on the fact that the work programme is an opportunity to address the social, economic and environmental dimension of climate action, and highlighted the strong link between the work programme and the Sustainable Development Goals. Some Parties highlighted that the work programme should make use of international cooperation to support developing countries' access to means of implementation, while many underlined that the work programme has an essential role to play in mobilizing a broad set of actors and arenas, as well as in sending signals to those outside the UNFCCC process. Many Parties highlighted the importance of ensuring that the implementation of the work programme fully reflects the cross-cutting nature of just transitions, including mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage.

Proceedings of the second annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition

I. Welcome address

1. Kerryne James (Grenada) and Yoko Alender (Estonia), the two co-chairs of the second annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition, welcomed participants to the round table and introduced the keynote speakers.

II. Keynote speeches

2. Elnur Soltanov, Deputy Minister of Energy of Azerbaijan and Chief Executive Officer of COP 29, delivered a keynote speech highlighting the urgent need for just transitions. He stated that effective climate action requires a whole-of-economy and whole-of-society approach to ensure that no one is left behind and emphasized the need for shared commitments to shaping just transition pathways that are not only aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement but also rooted in the principles of equity, inclusiveness and sustainable development. He urged Parties to address the broad impacts of just transitions on societies, economies and the workforce in order to facilitate transitions that are fair for and inclusive of everyone, highlighting that just transitions require the prioritization and protection of vulnerable communities. He reflected on the importance of international cooperation at every level and across borders, sectors and communities, noting that transitions to a low-emission economy not only pose technical and economic challenges, but also require a fundamental transformation. In closing the speech, he urged Parties to work together, learn from one another and inspire each other.

3. Noura Hamladji, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, also gave a keynote speech, in which she emphasized the importance of just transitions for closing ambition and implementation gaps with a view to keeping the 1.5 °C goal alive and achieving the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement. Recalling that the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme was established at COP 27 with the purpose of hearing all perspectives, considering countries' different circumstances and exploring solutions for just transition pathways that leave no one behind, she highlighted the integral role of the work programme in building resilience, responding to loss and damage and mobilizing the support of local communities. She urged Parties to drastically raise their climate ambition, including in the context of NAPs and the third generation of NDCs, and to anchor their climate plans in justice and cooperation, pursuing a whole-of-economy approach and empowering all actors of society, including women, Indigenous Peoples, youth and people with disabilities, to participate meaningfully in the transition process.

III. Reflections on the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme

4. Following the keynote speeches, Nabeel Munir, Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, and Harry Vreuls, Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, reflected on the first year of implementation of the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme.

5. The Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation emphasized the bidirectional connection between the annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition and the work programme. He highlighted that the work programme is considered important by a wide range of non-Party stakeholders, as evidenced by the large number of submissions received, the well-attended dialogues and the interventions made during contact group sessions. Noting that all stakeholders – from youth activists, the private sector, trade unions, academia and Indigenous and local communities to women's rights organizations, local governments and farmers – want to have their voices heard, he encouraged Parties to listen to all stakeholders

and to consider their views in the development of just transition policies.

6. The Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice highlighted some of the common themes that emerged from Parties' and non-Party stakeholders' interventions and submissions in relation to the two dialogues under the work programme held in 2024. These included the importance of ensuring a whole-of-society and whole-of-economy approach to just transitions, the need to expand concepts such as the workforce to include the informal sector, the care economy, unemployed people and the workers of tomorrow, and that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach when it comes to just transitions.

7. Both Chairs highlighted the important role of the second annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition in facilitating reflection on how the work programme can serve as an effective tool for assisting Parties in further developing and implementing their climate plans in the context of just transition pathways that promote sustainable development and poverty eradication.

IV. Round-table discussions

8. Following the reflections of the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies, the co-chairs of the second annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition, Kerryne James and Yoko Alender, delivered their opening remarks for the round-table discussions. Kerryne James identified the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme as an opportunity for advancing 1.5 °C-aligned development pathways in various national contexts and circumstances. Advocating for a cross-cutting, whole-of-society approach to implementing the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, she contextualized the work programme as a means for addressing the social and economic dimensions of climate action to ensure a fair and inclusive transition to low-carbon economies that builds on the best available science.

9. Yoko Alender characterized just transitions as a people-centric approach to climate action that considers workforces and households, with particular attention paid to vulnerable and marginalized communities. In this context, she emphasized the need for meaningful social dialogue with all stakeholders in order to facilitate wide participation in finding the best solutions for the climate crisis and in building climate-resilient societies. She emphasized the value of the work programme as a key tool for achieving net zero emissions while reaping the transformative social, economic and environmental benefits of the necessary transitions. She noted the opportunity for the next round of NDCs and NAPs to become drivers of greater fairness and inclusivity.

10. The co-chairs then reminded participants of the guiding questions (see para. 5 of this document) and opened the floor to participants. During the course of the discussions, Kristi Klaas, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Climate of Estonia, replaced Yoko Alender in co-chairing the discussions.

11. Following the discussions, Kerryne James and Kristi Klaas provided some brief reflections on the views shared before concluding the round table.