

No loan-based climate financing anymore, we demand justice-based grants.

Today, 22 October 2022, a round table discussion headlined “Climate Diplomacy towards COP 27: Articulating the Country Position Together” was held at Azimur Rahman Conference Hall, The Daily Star Center, Dhaka at 10:00 am by Center for Participatory Research and Development- CPRD and several other non-government development organizations, with a view to determine and solidify CSOs position at the upcoming 27th session of the conference of the parties (COP 27) to be held at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt and help Bangladesh government thereby to frame the country strategy towards the conference. CPRD’s Chief Executive Mr. Md. Shamsuddoha facilitated the entire discussion and presented the keynote of the event. The core discussion was contributed to by a number of legislators, climate change and policy experts, and CSO leaders, including Mr. Tanvir Shakil Joy, Member of Parliament, Barrister Shamim Haider Patwary, Member of Parliament, Ms. Khodeja Sultana Lopa, Country Director of Diakonia Bangladesh, Ms. Rabeya Begum, Executive Director of SDS, Dr. Golam Rabbani, Head of Climate Bridge Fund, Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Director of PKSF, and Mr. Md. Arifur Rahman, Chief Executive of YPSA.

In the keynote speech Mr. Shamsuddoha said, the developed countries are yet to implement their duties and responsibilities for staving off the climate change. Pointing to the status quo of economic development and GHGs emission scenario around the globe, Mr. Doha said, without remarkable increase of GHG emission reduction targets and implementing those appropriately, the horse of climate change cannot be reigned anymore. He said, a scope of boosting up the low flow of climate financing has stemmed from the urgency for reducing the ever-increasing adaptation gap and devising a formal mechanism for compensating the climate induced losses and damages potentially affecting different regions and countries. In order to exploit the opportunities, Bangladesh should develop an integrated working-strategy to which we, the CSOs, can contribute. He stressed that USD 100 billion is by no means sufficient anymore, the present reality of climate change and its impacts warrants the fund to be no less than USD 1 trillion. He also demanded the climate finances be solely grants-based, as the climate financing in the form of loans is another injustice on the already tormented countries. The developed countries are trying to bypass the UNFCCC process by offering some deals outside the UNFCCC umbrella, which may debilitate the focus and spoil long-earned achievements of the negotiations. Exemplifying the climate induced human rights violation in the southern coastal zone of Bangladesh, Mr. Doha also urged for presenting the ground evidences of climate change induced violation of human rights in the negotiation.

The special guest, Mr. Tanvir Shakil Joy resented on exclusion of parliamentarians in the Bangladesh government’s delegates to COP 27. He pointed with grave concern that there is often lack of a tone relationship between the government and the civil society, but the two stakeholders must come under the same umbrella on climate change issue. He assured of presenting the issues derived in today’s discussion in different platforms. He also opined, “all the powers will not come into a consensus over night, but we have no alternative to keeping the coordinated

movement on. Climate induced migrants have become a great concern for us. We are shouting from our side, but there is no promising initiative as yet. The developed countries are trying to translate it as our way to claim help, but the fact does indicate an opposite scenario". He said that, there have been so many projects financed out of the climate funds, of which many instances indicate sheer wastage of money. Such wastage harms the image of the country to the global community and will about loss for the country in the long run. So he urged the implementers to be more sensible in utilizing the project money.

The other special guest, Barrister Shamim Haider Patwary, MP said, the climate change negotiation of ours is going through an uncoordinated process, and the government should facilitate a vibrant coordination among the civil society, policy makers, think tanks, and other stakeholders. We are yet to present our issues and climate induced L&Ds in an acceptable and scientifically authentic manner. He demanded a separate fund for the highly affected countries, and he wants Bangladesh to take a leading role in this regard. He stressed that, there should be an allied program among the CSOs; the parliamentarians also have some roles to play, they should talk in the national assembly as well as outside it on the inputs coming from the civil society.

Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed said, there is a noticeable gap between the civil society and policy makers; the government officials often seem unwilling to reach out to the civil society. Mentioning that the parliamentary standing committee also has some responsibility, he demanded that the committee to make the MoEFCC increase consultation and sharing with the CSOs.

Dr. Golam Rabbani, Head of Climate Bridge Fund, pointed that the fund requirement for addressing climate change is soaring very rapidly. For instance, by 2030, the fund requirement for compensating L&D will stand at USD 580 billion. He said, we are still far away from establishing 50% of climate finances for adaptation. He also said that 70% of the finances at present are loans, imposing a heavy burden of debt on the already indebted countries, and we should raise voice to reverse this practice. He also added that, though the developed world acknowledges climate change, they are not still admitting the impacts properly, which is clearly a double standard position.