



Webinar:
India's global climate strategy and COP-28

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Anindita Sinh:

Welcome to this webinar, India's global climate cooperation and COP28. We have an hour of presentation and discussions from the speakers. I am going to quickly jump in and start. Welcome and we are so happy to have you here. This webinar is going to basically discuss our edited report by Dr Constantino Xavier and Dr Karthik Nachiappan who are fellow at the CSEP and Non-Resident fellow at CSEP and Research Fellow at the Institute of South Asian studies at National university of Singapore. This report basically discusses seven case studies on India's climate diplomacy and India's engagement at the international level on this front. The report offers research based actionable foreign policy recommendations and options for India to accelerate its green transition to reach its 2030 targets and 2070 targets on its low carbon ambitions. So, the context of this report is to give you a basic idea on how we came about this is. India has seen an evolving climate diplomacy. So, at Rio when the UNFCCC which is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was formulated, India played a great role and since 1992 India has been an advocate for having development as one of the main pillars and the main agenda of the climate change negotiation. And this may have been seen as... there has been a recent fragmentation of the geopolitical context. We see multiple other frameworks coming in. Uni-lateral, multilateral, bi-lateral. And as UNFCCC is seeing a little bit of a fragmentation, India is now proactively innovating and also joining many of these new climate frameworks. So, this climate diplomacy diversification and innovation has seen multiple challenges as well as opportunities for India. India has recently developed the international solar alliance which we'll have Vyoma talk to us about. And also, the CDRI the coalition for the disaster resolute infrastructure, both of them came out of COP21 in Paris. So, India has been taking up a key role in innovating and also joining multiple other frameworks. So, despite this, all these frameworks often have overlapping agendas, overlapping issues that they take into account and India doesn't have a comprehensive climate strategy to address its low carbon transition. And this report aims to give some direction and some foreign policy options for India to do this. So, the report identifies mainly four tracks which are multilateral, mini-lateral, triangular and bilateral. The report is structured in a way that it goes through these four tracks in this order. So, along the multilateral track this is when we discuss the UNFCCC agencies like the international energy agency, international agency for renewable energy... so, the first policy brief in our report is on climate transparency in India's leadership. This discusses how India has actually been coordinating in the UNFCCC and it has been taking a huge leadership role. So, this policy briefed by Jalak Agarwal and Sumit Prasad, discusses the enhanced transparency framework, which discusses how India reports on its nationally determined contributions at COP. And it showcases that India has actually performed really well and is taking a leadership role in this framework. The second policy brief by our colleagues at the IEA discusses how India is engaging with the international energy agency, how this agency that was actually set up by the OECD countries back in the 1970s is now also expanding its agenda to multiple other sectors such as mainly specific to energy transition and how it's also expanding its regional ambit. So, India has been an associate member and is also now looking for membership of the IEA. On the mini-lateral front, we have a policy brief on the international solar alliance by Vyoma Jha who will be discussing this further. And it was set up like I mentioned in 2015 as part of the COP21 at Paris. And the second policy brief under this is the QUAD. And this is by Aparna Roy, ORF and Charmi Mehta who discussed that how

India is playing a role in the climate working group of the QUAD and how this can then be leveraged for India to have more of a climate narrative in the QUAD. Even though this hasn't come out yet. But how India can leverage this for this thing. Under triangular cooperation we have a policy brief by Pooja Ramamurthi who discusses how India can further use triangular development partnerships to further its agenda on technology transfer for climate transition and have knowledge centers to promote the idea of south-south climate cooperation. Under the bilateral track, we have seen these multiple various development India has been engaging with various developed countries such as the US, the EU, Germany and Japan. And our brief discusses two policy briefs, one on the India-US clean energy partnership. Our colleagues at ORF America have written on how this has developed. They have looked at the various joint statements that have come out and how even though India's bilateral engagements focus on multiple sectors, India has been trying to fit in a climate narrative into its bilateral engagements. The last and final policy brief in our report and also on its bilateral track is by Axel Nordenstam, who will be discussing this further later. And its on mapping India-EU climate relations. And he discusses how India has engaged with various multiple both states and member nations of the EU and the EU itself. And how those developments have taken place and how climate has become a central agenda for many of these discussions. So, the report also comes up with offers of few policy options for India to bolster its climate diplomacy. The first is appointing a Prime Minister special envoy for climate cooperation. This is a position that we actually had in the government from 2007 to 2010. This is a cabinet rank position which was responsible for convening and coordinating with agencies internally, domestically, as well as formulating the stance that India would have internationally on multiple climate cooperation platforms and it was key in developing India's stance and the report suggests that this would help India coordinate and formulate a more nuanced strategy for climate cooperation. And this is one of the key policy options that the editors have put out. Second is to develop a climate cooperation division at the MEA. So, the MEA has recently seen a restructuring and reformulation, it has developed more region specific and sector specific divisions such as the indo-pacific division and the division on new and renewable energy. So, the report offers that having a climate cooperation division at the MEA would help direct a lot of the international cooperation that India aims to do and is already doing and will cut down a lot of roadblocks that we are facing. The third policy option is to have a secretary level position at the MEA. So, this is to then help uplift climate and climate action as an agenda for international coordination. The editor suggests that having a position which is similar to the secretary rank position as secretary east or secretary North West, it would help put climate on the forefront of India's foreign policy. And the fourth policy recommendation is to have a climate wing and at the India's diplomatic missions abroad. Many of the other countries such as various EU member nations, the US, China, already have a climate wing which has specific offices that look at the country's climate diplomacy and how they function, how they engage with other countries, so the editor suggest that having something similar at India's mission would again help direct India's climate strategy. Our report was launched last month. And we had Dr Ajay Mathur who is the director general of the International Solar Alliance gave the key note remarks. We had Professor Navroz Dubash from CPR, Ambassador Shyam Saran who was actually the climate envoy from 2007 to 2010 come and join us and give us a few remarks. And we had Professor Danashree Jayaram from Manipal University who is also an expert on climate security come and join us and it was a well-received report launch. You can find the press release online if you want. These are some of the learnings that the report comes out with. The main one is to enhance the climate finance.

To look into things like the development of the multilateral development banks, including more private sector into financing climate mitigation as well as climate adaptation. The second is an increased focus and centrality to the global south which is again something that India is advocating for and to put in more needs of technology transfer, more coordination on the forefront. Specifically related to climate. And the third is the need to improve domestic policy coordination and institutional capacity. So, we at CSEP under the foreign policy vertical are looking at the first two. Specifically, as upcoming research agendas. We in fact held two round tables in October. One on climate finance and how India can leverage multiple institutions, look at multiple institutions for enhancing climate finance and also on the role of global south. So, Dr Xavier and Dr Nachiappan will be leading the work on climate finance and Pooja here will be leading the work on the global south. So, I will now offer it up to Vyoma, Pooja and Axel to take it further and talk about their own specific policy briefs. Thank you so much. We will start with Vyoma. Following the same pattern. We'll follow with Vyoma, then go to Pooja who will be discussing triangular climate cooperation and go then to Axel we'll be discussing the bilateral track.

Vyoma Jha:

Thank you so much Anindita. I hope everybody can hear me. So, before I begin, I want to really start by thanking Constantino, Karthik, Pooja, Anindita and the entire team at CSEP for bringing everybody together for this collaboration. And it's been really enjoyable reading everybody's pieces over the last month now. And sort of learning so much about the different ways in which India has been engaging across different forums on climate change. Today I am going to speak about one that India has created and steered over the last now seven years since the announcement at the Paris COP in 2015. Before I begin my remarks, just the usual academic disclaimer that the views I express here today are personal and don't necessarily reflect those of my employer or CSEP. Before I sort of launch into what or how India has been engaging across this Mini-lateral kind of diplomacy, I will give you a little primer on what exactly the international solar alliance is, how it came about and why I title my brief – bridging the gap. And when I say the gap that essentially is the gap between Indian climate policy and Indian strategic thinking. Now the ISA was announced at the Paris COP in 2015. Came at a very opportune time, sort of leading up to a very tense negotiation __ for India that year, especially its role in terms of either securing or scuttling of global climate deal. So, it was heavily watched what India would do and how it would be at the negotiations. Could it be announcing something new and the international solar alliance was a joint announcement by India and France in the first day of the Paris COP. And it really set the tone for a successful cooperative two weeks which did end up in the agreement, in the Paris agreement and the new global climate deal that everybody had been waiting on. I argue in lot of my work that the international solar alliance was an interesting shift in India's foreign policy where climate change really became for the first time perhaps a focal point for how India was furthering its strategic interest. I say this for two primary reasons. One was that it ended up being an illustration of how India was trying to take on a leadership role in a climate adjacent space, in this particular case solar energy. So, it was really trying to take ownership of it as it sort of identified at that time a space that hadn't necessarily been addressed within the formal UNFCCC framework to a great extent. So, the idea of really carving out a new international organization which I at that point of time I will just add here quickly was not a new international organization. Was merely an announcement of a new alliance? It took shape as a treaty based organization later on. But the idea to make

this announcement was to leverage its own sort of power in a climate adjacent space and make the argument that A) India was serious about addressing climate change and B) that India was also not going to play spoil sport at the Paris climate talks as was sort of widely kind of anticipated before the two weeks. The second reason for the sort shift in terms of why climate change really started furthering India's strategic interest was that it provided an opportune moment for India to really assert its power at the global stage by creating a new international organization. And this was something that became very apparent after Paris and after the reception that India got for this announcement of the international solar alliance which is meant to be an alliance of about 120 countries, lying between the two tropics. So, tropic of Capricorn, tropic of cancer and the idea underlying this entire institution initially was that the countries with the maximum potential for deployment of solar energy are also the poorest and the most vulnerable countries in the world with no or little energy access. So, the idea of bringing them together, creating a new voice, predominantly in the global south given the geographies of the member states of the ISA, it really ended up being a new sort of leveraging a new geography to bring countries together and have them really become a common voice in terms of asking for more finance and technology to enable not just energy access, but energy transition in these countries. But, why do I then say that there is this sort of gap between what was Indian climate policy and what was the Indian strategic thinking behind the ISA? The reason for this is sort of threefold as I lay out in the brief as well. It is one is to do with the legal form of the ISA. What it allows for and maybe where its falling short currently. The second is sort of the big question on finance and how that remains a missing link. The third being whether the ISA really was a first step in India grand sort of climate strategy so to speak. I will address each of these one by one. In terms of just the legal form of ISA, it ended up becoming a treaty based organization a year and few days after its announcement... sorry, after its opening for ratification. So, the formal text of the ISA treaty was stated at the Marrakesh COP and just a little bit before the next COP after that ISA came into being in December of 2017. So, it came into legal force and even though it has the sort of hard shell of being a treaty based organization it provides for a lot of flexibilities in terms of how the treaty provisions operate. I have argued in a lot of my writings that the hybrid nature of ISA which really borrowed very heavily from what the Paris agreement was also doing in terms of combining both the top down as well as the bottom up architecture of climate action. The treaty structure of the ISA really allowed for having legitimacy because of the fact that countries were ratifying it and yet it retained the flexibility in terms of how it would operate, how things could go forward. So, the idea really was that it would be the participating actors which included a variety of non-state actors from multilateral institutions, private institutions, financial institutions, non-state actors, NGOs etc. so, wide spectrum of non-state entities which became members of the ISA and the idea was that they would take the implementation forward. And it would become an action-based organization or an action oriented organization. They took great pains to distinguish themselves from the IRENA the international renewable energy agency which they believe was more research based and sort of advocacy focused. But even in the five and half or six years now of ISA being operational, it remains much more of a research based organization and it doesn't really have much to speak in terms of an action oriented profile. A lot of the projects, a lot of the programs that ISA is doing are sort of heavily focused across advocacy and analysis, capacity building, in the developing countries, primarily the African countries as well as Small Island developing states and least developed countries and providing them programmatic support for projects to take off on the ground. So, in terms of the action-oriented nature of really mobilising big finance, big

money going into these regions of the world, the ISA still is sort of working towards that and right now is sort of operating more in a research focused manner. And this brings me to the next point on missing link on finance. The objective of the ISA when it was announced was to mobilise 1 trillion US dollars by 2030. And right now, it really is far away from the goal. There has been some sort of consistent financial support provided to the ISA, but it is mostly been by France as well as India which are the sort of co-host and in terms of really mobilising the private sector investment it remains well short of that mark. And finally, when one does think of it as a grand strategy in terms of Indian foreign policy the first assembly of the ISA made out the concept of 'One sun, One world, One grid' and really connecting different regions of the world under a common solar grid for sharing of solar powered electricity. But there are massive issues with how the grid will come about, what the operationalisation will look like and really the kind of splintered implementation across different ministries currently in India... I am happy to elaborate on this more. But I am just going to stop my remarks here and hand it over to Pooja to just talk about India's engagement more with the trilateral ways of climate diplomacy. Thank you.

Pooja Ramamurthi:

Thank you so much, for your comments Vyoma. I am Pooja and I am an associate fellow at CSEP and I also want to thank Anindita and Karthik and Constantino a lot for including me in this really exciting project. I guess the reason I was motivated to write about this topic is because if you think about essentially what the world needs, what countries need to meet their climate goals, its financing of course, its technology and it is also capacity building and institutions. So, these are your three main points when it comes to what countries need to meet the climate goals and unfortunately a lot of countries especially in the global south and the developing world don't have these. So, a lot of principles that were enshrined in a lot of climate negotiations was the assumption that the global north or the richer countries or the countries that were historically responsible would help countries in the developing world meet these goals, through the transfer of finance, tech and capacity building. So many of the conversations around COP and global environmental cooperation tend to come from this very north south paradigm where the countries in the global north have to aid or help or have to provide these three things that I mentioned to the countries in the global south. But that was two decades ago. Things have changed like the global governance has changed, you have a lot of rising powers, you have a lot of understanding that maybe especially when it comes to technology transfer and institutional building, you cannot blindly take a one-size fits approach. So, you cannot take a technology or a policy or a financing innovation which has worked maybe in a European country and then go and try to put it in some other country which may not have same social context, the same institutional capability or even the same technology needs. This led me to think that even if you need a lot of the findings from the COP, it's always very north south. I started to read more and more and then I started to notice that there is a lot of work that is happening within the global south itself. There is a lot of work that's happening with regards to indigenous innovations. There's a really good paper in nature that talks about how the global south as actually unsung hero of this whole climate change movement. And then this made me realize that it would be exciting to study triangular cooperation which basically moves away from this north south paradigm and says that the north and the south can work together with one country in the south as a pivotal partner. And that actually made me realize that there can be a lot of global south-south collaboration, a lot of cooperation and at the same time we can

get help of course, from our partner countries in the north. So, this was what motivated me to write about the policy brief and I specifically looked at the role that India can play because we have been really involved in the past and also as well as now in a lot of countries in the global south. We have helped them, small island nations, LDCs. We worked with both countries. Like for example we worked with the US, the UK and Japan on these triangular arrangements. But we also work with the bigger organisations. For example, India is a top contributor financially to the UNDP financial south-south collaboration fund. I find that we are actually doing a lot of work. We are working in this triangular space, but what is happening is that these projects tend to be very one off. They don't seem to be systematic and they seem to be fragmented. We can't actually quantify the extent to which India has worked on climate change, what impact it has had. These projects don't tend to have a lot of monitoring and the evaluation. We also don't tend to as Anindita already said, we don't seem to have a centralised agency that monitors these climate change projects. And we also don't seem to have an institutionalisation of it. So, some of these recommendations that I make is although India is doing a lot, it has a very important part or it can be the bridge between the north and the south and it has a really important part to play in enabling a global climate transition, right now we need more institutionalisation of it. The Prime Minister announced a global centre of excellence, which is a knowledge platform for exchange. We need to build on those things, we need to have non-state and state actors in like engaging in the process. We need a lot more monitoring and the evaluation. And we also need to narrow down our focus. When we work on things in these triangular arrangements, we should have sector specific pathways. And I think that climate and energy can be one of those pathways where India can really, really make a change and be a global sustainability leader. And at that I think my time is up. So, I will pass it on to Axel.

Axel Nordenstam:

Thank you very much, Pooja, Vyoma and Anindita and CSEP as a collective for hosting me not only for this webinar but also for inviting me to contribute to this report. It is a very timely report and an important conversation to have. I am Axel Nordenstam, I am an associate fellow at the Swedish institute of international affairs and a doctoral student in international relations at Stockholm University and currently Delhi based. So, it's great to be here. Let me give you a brief summary of the chapter. Because for those sitting in Delhi its 7:30 and we should really devote our time wisely. So, in a nutshell, what I am arguing in my brief on India's climate relations with the European Union is actually a bit of a contrast to this standard reporting surrounding on north south division. Because in spite of the historical differences and historical different side taking by India and the European union in climate negotiations, they have found ways to collaborate on climate action. So, in my brief I exhibit India's cooperation with European partners as a balancing act between two levels. Between the level the EU level on the one hand, where when Delhi reaches out to Brussels and collaborates with European commission and EU institutions on one hand. And the level of member states within the European Union, such as Germany, France, Sweden, Denmark and Netherlands. What I found in this brief and throughout my research that has been published here and there before is that India has chosen to enter those kinds of climate partnerships at both levels. So, that means that India basically has conducted a balancing act between engaging on the EU level and the member state level. On the EU front most significantly is the India – EU clean energy and climate partnership from 2016, signed a year after the Paris agreement at COP21, which has laid the foundation for concrete project and solar parks. But at the same time India has entered those

climate partnerships. So, it's a very intriguing element for policy analysis and that sparked me to also set up some analysis in this brief. And in a nutshell, I am arguing that India should evaluate the balance between these two levels now and reflect about the resources allocated to implementing the existing partnerships. So, put very simply India has existing partnerships at the moment. So, now its time to think about how to use them effectively and basically use those partnerships for Delhi's interests. Because clearly accelerating the green transition is a shared priority for the India EU strategic partnerships. So, the question is how do we avoid redundancies and really use the existing frameworks at its best. So, that's the brief in a couple of minutes. But let me share a couple of more points and elaborate a little bit further. The brief itself consists of one elaboration on India's engagement with EU institutions followed by India's engagement with EU member states. And then in the end I also lay out some options for Indian diplomacy with European partners. So, for those interested have a look at the content. But I'll go through some quick pointers. First when it comes to India's engagement with EU institutions a lot of things have happened in the past ever since India entered diplomatic relations with European economic community in the 1960s when India and the EU had their difficulties in climate negotiations, we saw the first joint working group and an energy panel and joint declaration between India and the EU in the time between 2005 and 2012. So, that basically that time set the foundations for some kind of climate cooperation. But it was very thin, to be frank. Some scholars suggest that was because of stumbling cooperation in general and also on trade. So, after Paris, when India entered a clean energy and climate partnership with the EU that really set the foundation for more concrete action with the solar parks. I think the fact that we saw a TTC, trade and technology council adopted by and endorsed by both India and the EU last year, all signifies and underlines the strategic importance of climate cooperation between the two blocks. And in the TTC itself we find we have two working groups on climate related issues. First the resilient supply chains and the clean technologies. So, two out of three working within the TTC act are actually composed of climate related issues. And this is important for India moving forward. At the same time, we have also seen a bit of friction at the EU level especially regarding the CBAM. And I elaborate a little bit on that in the brief. I'll recommend people to look at that because that's a longer discussion. India has also been able to attract a bit of investments and with available finance from the European investment bank in the form of loans. So, this is the brief summary of India's engagement on the EU level. On the member state level interestingly, we have seen a surge of bilateral partnerships, not with all EU member states because there are 27. That would be quite a huge task for Indian diplomacy to be frank. But with a select group of the member states. Vyoma talked about the most significant climate partnerships, the international solar alliance, a climate institution co-led by India and France. Even though it seems to be very much that India takes the lead on it. So, that is one example. Another example is the leadership group on industry transition that India co-leads with Sweden since 2019. I list those in the brief. So, those interested can just open the brief and just take a look on the table and get the overview. The interesting part is that we have actually seen a gradual progression in terms of how those partnerships come about. It often starts with a couple of MOUs being signed and then those are followed by partnerships. And the partnerships have often been announced in the presence of the Prime Minister at bilateral summits, at multilateral forums. So, that suggests that the Prime Minister has used those partnerships to really underscore his position as a friend of the environment and in his interactions with European leaders. But another reason as I lay out in the brief could of course, be that both India and European partners see business opportunities in those climate

partnerships which could be equally important. Before wrapping up let me also draw attention to the fact that some EU member states have chosen to join climate institutions co-led by India. I present a little map in the brief where the reader can clearly see that there are some EU member states that have actually chosen to join India's climate institutions. But not all. And this causes and this for me motivates some thinking about what to do... what Indian diplomacy can do with European partners. I think I could elaborate on that now. But I think I'll stop here and encourage people to read or reach out and we can continue from here. Thank you.

Anindita Sinh:

Thank you so much, Vyoma, Pooja and Axel for an overview of the brief and for delving into what the various tracks are, how India is engaging with them. So, now just pivoting quickly to how India is going to engage at COP, I would want to get your views on how you think India is going to... what are the basic sectors or focus areas that India is going to be discussing maybe at the negotiations. There's been a lot of talk on discussions about climate finance featuring as one of the key policies and focus areas of the COP itself. And also, there's been discussions on global south becoming key in taking forward a lot of the negotiations. So, maybe starting with Axel and Pooja, Vyoma, you can chime in whenever and just give us your views.

Axel Nordenstam:

Yes. Happily. This is a very important time and also important topic. I mean, from my perspective I am expecting India to push for renewable energy and also for climate finance. Those are two really hot topics for India at COP. Has been so in the past COPs. Historically of course, India has always valued climate justice and equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. So, that pushes forward on the responsibility side. I think we'll see some kind of on that front as well. Especially when it comes to loss and damage at COP in UAE. But the most striking part that I am expecting is that India will actually present itself as part of the solution. This has been one of the key objectives for India at COPs in the past 10 years and I think the Paris COP really signified that when India presented itself as part of the solution. But the option of initiating a new organization has already been used. That happened with international solar alliance. So, presenting itself as part of the solution maybe a bit demanding. But I think that is definitely going to be one of the key elements for India at COP.

Pooja Ramamurthi:

I just want to chime in with this is that often if you see the way India has been reported from the COPs, it has been quite unfair actually. Although India has constantly tried to... has always put itself as an actor that wants to present itself as part of a solution, often the reporting and I would say a bit unfairly has always kind of placed India as someone who is opposing things. And so, I think especially this year one thing that India might push for is that when it comes to phasing down of fossil fuels they might say not only on coal, but also to include natural gas in that, which a lot of western countries have been pushing back on because obviously they use a lot of natural gas. So, that might be one of the stances that we see in that India is taking. I think there will also be a lot of focus of course, on being the voice of the global south and trying to portray itself as a country from the G20 that is representing the interests of the global south. But one thing is important to note is that the global south is not always one block. For instance, a lot of small island nations and things like that are not really backing the argument that we need to continue emitting in order to develop because they are going to be the ones that are first

going to be affected. So, the funding might be used more on things that are more climate adaptation as opposed to mitigation. But yes, I think India will push a lot as Axel said for the loss and damage fund as well. So, I think those are some of the stances that we will see and of course, we will see India trying to push this whole LIFE narrative which is going to become more human centric and that is something that India surprisingly although its per capita emissions are so low, India has been really pushing for this behavioural and consumer level demand side change and a low carbon future because I think something India has always said from the previous governments as well is that we are not going to take the path of the western countries or other industrialised countries in high emission growth. We are always going to try at the same time to manage our emissions as we develop as well. So, I think India might try to also push for this more human centric approach towards addressing climate change.

Anindita Sinh:

I think just quickly coming in I think, what you said about LIFE. That will also tie in very well with the COP 28 focused on having nature-based solutions. I think that is one of the key points that I think this COP is going to look at. So, you want to go ahead.

Vyoma Jha:

I am going to add a little to what I think both Pooja and Axel have laid out really well and again I think key issues really on top of this COPs agenda from India's point of view might be climate finance for sure, mission LIFE which is something that India has been steering for the last almost two COPs and the fact that it was such a big part of G20 leaders' declaration as well. I think from my point of view the big thing really to watch out for at this COP, would be the sort of global renewable energy target as well as the doubling of energy efficiency target. Both things were something that India really sort of worked had to achieve consensus on for the New Delhi leader's declaration and you can see the COP presidency, the UAE presidency also make that a major goal for them. Really from India's point of view, I think it ties a lot into how it is viewing finance and technology, sort of moving into greater renewable energy projects at home as well as the broader developing world. Because and again I take the ISA example here, but also you see it with another sort of mini-laterals that India is trying to create. Could be the CDRI, it could be the LeadIT. It could be the most recently the global biofuel alliance, you sort of see this pattern in India's diplomacy where they are creating new institutions very sort of sector specific institutions which can then become sort of venues to channelise more finance and technologies into these specific sectors. Again, sort of all of them are operating near the UNFCCC universe. But not really within the UNFCCC universe. So, you are leveraging bilateral relationships, you are leveraging private sector investments, you are really leveraging the business opportunities in a lot of these specific sectors which are all crucial in the clean energy transition. So, I think really from India's point of view and this is really why we see these targets within the G20 leaders' declaration under India's presidency as well is that the idea of setting a global target becomes a way for India to really argue for the ceiling and for all the finance and technologies to sort of match that ceiling. Particularly in areas of the world where you need it the most. Again, becoming the voice of the global south, that is something that India has really been a big champion of through the year. Again, inviting African union to become part of the G20, now the G21, we don't really know how the terminology will work going forward. But really how India lends its voice to steer more finance and more technology into these regions of the world, the global south particularly will be critical to not just how we

are solving the problem of climate change, but critical to how India positions itself within global climate governance.

Anindita Singh:

I think adaptation may become one of the key focus areas that India looks at because Vyoma also mentioned that, domestic challenges are what... and I think our report also touches upon that, that India's climate diplomacy has often emanated from the domestic challenges that India faces and then it actually puts them out in its foreign policy to help actually tackle those challenges back at home. Adaptation has been one of the key challenges we see. Finance has not come in critically on multiple fronts, even on mitigation I think the G20 Summers and Singh report discuss how much the financing gap is 3 trillion US dollars come in annually. So, Axel and Pooja, you mentioned the loss and damage fund. I think there's been a huge controversy since last year on the key questions about where it would be housed, who is going to be going to be funding it, all of those were not discussed and I think those are going to be a focus of this COP. So, do you also see adaptation becoming one of the key focus areas of this upcoming COP?

Vyoma Jha:

Happy to go first briefly. Adaptation I believe has always been an issue at most COPs. I think most important like sort of in the last 10 years I think the Cancun COP and the Cancun agreements were really the ones which brought adaptation to front and centre. Then since then there's been the sort of highs and lows of which year it really comes up during the negotiations. I think this year with the operationalisation of the funding mechanism to address loss and damage that would be one key issue around adaptation for sure. I think how countries get together and formally adopt the draft text which came up about two weeks back at the Dubai, they had the fifth transitional committee meeting leading up to COP. They do have the draft text in terms of kind of compromise that both the developed and the developing world seem to have come up with in terms of how this fund would work, where it might be housed, how it will be going forward. But I think even a formal adoption at this COP will leave a lot of work to be done in terms of really how the fund is functional going forward. Because again, I think traditionally the multilateral climate finance space has just done very poorly on adaptation finance and that is the experience with the green climate fund as well which was expected to do better than sort of adaptation fund earlier on. Again, from India's perspective its interesting because I see and this is my opinion that the CDRI is a very adaptation focused initiative where you are kind of creating this new entity for making your infrastructure more climate resilient and sort of both in the face of disasters as well as from a forward looking point of view of just making existing infrastructure more resilient. So, that again in my opinion a unique initiative to really create a separate space, to target a specific target for mobilising finance around these kinds of initiatives.

Anindita Singh:

Also just maybe quickly thinking about one of the key issues that is going to come up in this COP is the global stock take which started at COP 21 in Paris and now it is going to conclude and the countries are supposed to submit their revisions and discuss their nationally determined contributions. So, how do you think India is going to do? It has already been a few reports on this and what India is looking at? What do you think India is going focus on, what are the things

that it is going to maybe bring up in negotiations? Pooja, you mentioned discussing ___ natural gas as well. Do you see all of this featuring in the way India then puts the negotiations forward in say the global stock take?

Pooja Ramamurthi:

I think you will see a lot of... even at the G20 meeting at the white house, in a lot of conversations, India states that it's one of the only... it is the only G20 country which is actually going to meet its NDCs. It has constantly said this and I am sure it's going to reiterate this also at the COP. I think it is going to call out that other countries are not meeting their NDCs and it is also in that way and I think I am not sure whether that's how true that statement is. But I do think India is more on track than a lot of western countries especially like the UK government actually came out now and said that – no, we can't put this burden on our tax payers. Even if we don't meet our NDCs, it is bad, but this is too much of something to put on our tax payers. I think that is going to be our stance that India is a climate leader, we are a sustainable leader, we want to remain so, and we are not going to back out on our pledges. I think that's going to be this stance. Of course, a lot of organisations, lot of critique says that India is not doing enough. Although the government says it is doing enough. There's been a lot of external comments saying India is not doing enough. So, that is something that I think domestically India will have to deal with. But at least externally I think this is going to be the stance that we are doing enough. And it's going to push a lot of other countries to stick to their NDCs. I think it's going to push a lot of countries especially historical emitters to kind of not back out on their plans. That's the role that India can play and should play considering that we have been on track. Just one more thing. Coming into the loss and damage that Vyoma was talking about, I think India sees itself as a country that can assist. I think India itself as an emerging economy has enough capacity and institutional capacity to deal with adaptation a lot domestically. When we look at climate finance as a nation, we always look for mitigation, for investments, for new technology. That's where India wants its money to come in. Not so much like Pakistan dealt with this huge flood and India has to negotiate... India is not in that situation right now. But I do think, if India needs to be the voice of the global south and wants to really backup its intents, its intention that it needs to really voice out this global south need for loss and damage fund. It should and I hope it does really push for this. Axel any last comments?

Axel Nordenstam:

On this front I remember reading up a little bit on COP. I think it's one of the things that Indian press has reported about. Which to me seems like fairly logical is the fact that India is expected to push for a carbon negative trajectory for developed countries by 2050. So, that's basically India's position in the net zero debate. Which of course, brings... its quite telling and its quite concrete based on the outline that both Pooja and Vyoma just laid out here. This is probably their position. Of course, it raises questions about what happens after 2050 for those who have reached. Climate neutrality as well. I am expecting something. So, that is probably one of the potential contentions and another potential contention is probably the phase down versus phase out of coal. Which I expect to be a re-opt at this COP. Because it was highly present two years ago. I wouldn't be surprised if that would return too.

Anindita Sinh:

Axel quickly just... I will be closing this with you soon. You'd mentioned you were there last year in Egypt at COP 27 and I remember we were having a conversation before this, you mentioned that often and I think this is the case in most events. It's not always the big public events where all the discussions take place, much of the negotiations often happens at much smaller events. You being there, do you have any takeaways, what was your experience, how do you think that is going to maybe feature into what actually comes out of the COP?

Axel Nordenstam:

Yeah. Absolutely right. COP in itself is much wider than the general reporting. General reporting very rightly so focuses on climate negotiations and what happens in the rooms, the contentions there and has done so for ages. But as to what COP looks like, the format of the conference is that it comprises of two separate sides. The negotiations and the side events outside of the negotiations where dialogue between stakeholders, private sector and civil society to take place. So, that means that when you are present at COP, which means that you as a participant not a negotiator, but as a participant means that you can actually follow both at the same time. And for me it was... when I was there last year, it was striking that India had a huge pavilion that hosted some conversations. There were also side events. Last year we saw a LeadIT summit for instance. This year I am hearing and I have seen press releases saying that there will be a new LeadIT summit and also that LeadIT 2.0 will be announced. Exactly what that comprises of I guess we will see in a couple of weeks. So, that's on the side events. And then of course, the climate negotiations.

Anindita Singh:

Thank you. If Pooja, Vyoma, Axel, if any of you have any closing remarks, I think we can go ahead with those. And ...

Vyoma Jha:

A very quick closing remark, I think really borrowing from what Axel pointed out about India's recent submission on the first global stocktake to the UNFCCC. So, India's official submission actually outlines the fact that the developed countries need to do more and they need to go sort of faster on their climate goals. I think it is really India sort of positioning itself as doing a lot more, being a leader in climate action. That all sort of leads up to its really long standing stance of differentiated responsibility and I think it will really sort of stand strong on the fact that India is now at a point where it is doing a lot on climate action. It is taking a lot more responsibility. And if developed world is not meeting its earlier promises on finance, technology transfer, under the framework convention on climate change, then it is an inequitable way of moving forward with a common solution. I think that really sort of is what you sense from India's official submission to the first global stock take. They will really hone in on the differentiated responsibility argument that they had all along at climate convention.

Pooja Ramamurthi:

I think my closing remarks would just kind of also reflect on my policy brief that India really does have a critical role to play as a bridging between the global north and the south. It's really well positioned because some of its issues and some of the domestic policies and innovations it has, really feed into the goals that the global north is trying to achieve in the most vulnerable countries. Also, by building these new institutions, by engaging with a lot of global north actors

and the global south, I think India can be, not only the voice of the global south. That can actually help accelerate climate action. The COP I think this will be the stance that India will try to play as well. Thank you for hosting this really great webinar as well.

Axel Nordenstam:

Thanks a lot, also from my side for hosting this webinar and it really shows that climate negotiations can occupy a lot of us. Can get a lot of attention. But the broader sense with the report as far as I take it is that India's' global climate strategy is something that can take place throughout the year. So, even though we are focused on COPs now and those upcoming two weeks of intense negotiations and a number of side events, there will be a time afterwards as well.

Anindita Sinh:

Thank you so much. Taking off on that I would just want to say that Pooja is actually going to be leading our research on climate cooperation and the global south. And how India looks at it, what India does... that is what Pooja is going to be doing. So, you can look out for her work on that. Dr Xavier and Dr Nachiappan are going to be looking at climate finance, MDB reforms, which is again upcoming work that we are doing at CSEP. We recently had Dr Veda Vaidyanathan join us, who is also going to be looking at how India engages with partners in Africa. So, yeah, we have a lot of exciting work happening. I hope everybody is on the lookout for everything that happens. I would like to thank Axel, Pooja, Vyoma, for making time for joining and everybody at CSEP, all the participants as well for joining. It's really late in the evening in India, very early in the morning in the US. Thank you so much. Hope to see you soon.