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Headline: UN urged: 'Substance rather than process in climate talks'

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Residents walk by debris after powerful Typhoon Haiyan slammed into Tacloban city, Leyte province, central Philippines on Saturday. AP FILE PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines—Filipino climate activists called the United Nations Tuesday to translate into a concrete action the discussion addressing climate change, saying rich countries are the ones responsible for global warming.

Aksyon Klima, a network of Filipino climate activists, urged climate negotiators representing countries worldwide to prioritize "substance rather than process in the climate talks, especially in the areas of climate finance and loss and damage."

The UN launched last Monday a climate change conference in Warsaw, Poland for a 2015 deal cutting Earth-warming greenhouse gas emission. The talks are scheduled to end on November 22.

UN negotiators will discuss how to address loss and damage caused by the adverse effects of climate change as agreed upon during last year's climate conference in Doha, Qatar.

"Climate change has stacked more odds against us, setting us up for strong typhoons such as Haiyan (Philippine name: Yolanda) and already costing hundreds, if not thousands of lives of Filipinos. We demand concrete action in Warsaw, owed to us by the richer countries which are mostly responsible for global warming," said Voltaire Alferez, national coordinator of Aksyon Klima Pilipinas.

Alferez pointed out the country, even the rest of the world, cannot afford anymore "low expectations and stagnant discussions toward a 2015 climate deal, set to be implemented only in 2020."

He said in the statement of Aksyong Klima that "loss and damage due to climate change is beyond adaptation and has not been addressed yet in the negotiations. It is therefore of paramount importance that the negotiators in Warsaw agree on the establishment of an international mechanism to address losses attributed to climate change, including those caused by slow-onset events."

"This mechanism should enable countries to effectively and urgently recover from the impact of extreme weather events, like what happened to the Philippines in the aftermath of super typhoon Haiyan," Alferez said.

Aksyon Klima recalled that developed countries have publicly opposed the creation of an international mechanism compensating economic and non-economic losses due to the adverse effects of climate change, which developing countries have been pushing, including Philippines which is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

The climate activists also called on negotiators to set concrete targets for “mitigation and technology transfer.”

While the Climate Technology Center and Network (CTCN) has become operational back in Doha, Aksyon Klima lamented that the emerging picture of what it can offer is only technical assistance for climate technology transfer, which can cost only up to \$250,000.

According to the UN website, the mission of the CTCN is to stimulate technology cooperation and to enhance the development and transfer of technologies and to assist developing country parties at their request, consistent with their respective capabilities and national circumstances and priorities.

“The Warsaw talks should also foster the development of non-market mechanisms and a clearer framework for various approaches, including markets,” Alferez said.

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