

Headline: Cheaper climate change solutions available now—Kerry

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US Secretary of State John Kerry. AP FILE PHOTO

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MANILA, Philippines – Fighting climate change is about will and not about capacity, United States (US) Secretary of State John Kerry said in response to an international panel's report that greenhouse gases have risen to unprecedented levels.

"We already know that climate science is unambiguous and that every year the world defers action, the costs only grow. But focusing only on grim realities misses promising realities staring us right in the face," Kerry said in a statement released by the US Embassy in the Philippines Monday.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently released a report which found that the global emission of greenhouse gases has grown more quickly between 2000 and 2010 than each of the previous decades.

The report also said that changing of behaviors and technological measures can be used to limit global warming caused by too much greenhouse gases.

"So many of the technologies that will help us fight climate change are far cheaper, more readily available, and better performing than they were when the last IPCC assessment was released less than a decade ago," Kerry said.

"Good energy solutions are climate solutions and this report shines a light on energy technologies available right now to substantially reduce global emissions. These technologies can cut carbon pollution while growing economic opportunity at the same time," he said.

New normal

The Philippines was recently hit by super typhoon Yolanda (international name Haiyan), a weather phenomenon that has been regarded as the strongest and deadliest typhoon in history, killing thousands and causing massive destruction across provinces in the Visayas region.

Weather experts and climatologists have pointed to the storm as clear evidence of climate change and that this could be the new normal when it comes to typhoons.

"The [IPCC] report makes it very clear that we face an issue of global willpower, not capacity," Kerry said.

Youba Sokona, one of the co-chairmen leading the working group that made the report said that climate change mitigation needs to be uncoupled from the emission of greenhouse gases brought by growing economies and populations.

“Through providing energy access and reducing local air pollution, many mitigation measures can contribute to sustainable development,” Sokona said in a statement by the IPCC.

The report said that reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere requires the lowering of emissions from multiple sectors such as energy, transportation, industries, buildings, land use, and human settlements.

“This report is a wake-up call about global economic opportunity we can seize today as we lead on climate change,” Kerry said.

The US is second in the list of countries that produce the most greenhouse gases. China is at the top while India and Russia are third and fourth.

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