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THIS IS in response to the article, "PH can't afford failure of Paris climate talks, says Loren" (News, 12/1/15).

First, I congratulate Sen. Loren Legarda for her appointment as United Nations' Global Champion for Resilience. She deserves such recognition for advocating climate resilience since many years ago—way, way back when many doubted the existence of climate change and were saying that it was not a gut issue. Her appointment demonstrates that a climate-vulnerable nation like the Philippines is not bereft of visionary leaders who tirelessly work to ensure a safe future for our country and our planet.

I concur with Senator Legarda's statement that the Philippines will experience extreme weather events more frequently if no legally binding agreement had been reached among nations to cut down greenhouse gas emissions and limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. In fact, a coalition representing more than 100 countries, formed in secrecy six months ago, emerged at key UN talks in Paris to push for this agreement.

The "high ambition coalition" speaks for the majority of the 195 countries at the crunch conference and consists of 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, the United States and all of European Union member-states. But the notable exceptions include major developing countries such as China and India.

The group is focused on at least four key issues. They wanted an agreement at Paris to be legally binding; to set a clear long-term goal on global warming that is in line with scientific advice; to introduce a mechanism for reviewing countries' emissions commitments every five years; and to create a unified system for tracking the countries' progress in meeting their carbon goals.

We cannot just sit idly by and be at the mercy of other nations; indeed we cannot passively wait for other nations to willingly take responsibility for the climate tragedy they have caused. We have to compel developed nations to own up and pay up. The principle of common but differentiated responsibility must be at the core of the Paris climate agreement. —SONIA S. MENDOZA, chair, Mother Earth Foundation, 38 Highland Drive, Blue Ridge, Quezon City

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