

# Climate gets another chance

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● At their heart, negotiations were about how each nation funds action to mitigate and adapt to climate change

## Katowice, Poland

Nations yesterday struck a deal to breathe life into the landmark 2015 Paris climate treaty after marathon UN talks that failed to match the ambition the world's most vulnerable countries need to avert dangerous global warming. Delegates from nearly 200 states finalised a common rule book designed to deliver the Paris goals of limiting global temperature rises to well below two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit). "Putting together the Paris agreement work programme is a big responsibility," said COP24 president Michal Kurtyka as he gavelled through the deal after talks in Poland that ran deep into overtime.

"It has been a long road. We



COP24 president Michal Kurtyka jumps at the end of the final session of the COP24 summit on climate change in Katowice, southern Poland,

did our best to leave no one behind."

But states already dealing with devastating floods, droughts and extreme weather made worse by climate change said the package agreed in the mining city of Katowice lacked the bold ambition to cut emissions the world needed.

Egyptian ambassador Wael Aboulmagd, chair of the developing nations G77 plus China negotiating bloc, said the rule book saw the "urgent adaptation

needs of developing countries relegated to a second-class status."

Executive director of Greenpeace Jennifer Morgan said: "We continue to witness an irresponsible divide between the vulnerable island states and impoverished countries pitted against those who would block climate action or who are immorally failing to act fast enough."

The final decision text was repeatedly delayed as negotiators sought guidelines that could

ward off the worst threats posed by the heating planet while protecting the economies of rich and poor nations alike.

"Without a clear rulebook, we won't see how countries are actually doing what they say they are doing," Canada's Environment Minister Catherine McKenna said. At their heart, negotiations were about how each nation funds action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as how those actions are

reported.

## Report controversy

French President Emmanuel Macron, who has recently backed down on anti-pollution fuel tax hikes in the face of country-wide "yellow vest" protests, said France must "show the way" as he welcomed the progress made at the talks.

"The international community remains committed to the fight against climate change," he tweeted on Sunday.

"Congratulations to the UN, scientists, NGOs and all negotiators. France and Europe must show the way. The fight goes on." Developing nations had wanted more clarity from richer ones over how the future climate fight will be funded and pushed for so-called "loss and damage" measures.

This would see richer countries giving money now to help deal with the effects of climate change many vulnerable states are already experiencing.

Another contentious issue was the integrity of carbon markets, looking ahead to the day when the patchwork of distinct exchanges -- in China, the Europe Union, parts of the United States -- may be joined up in a global system.

The Paris Agreement calls for setting up a mechanism to guard against practices, such as double counting emissions savings, that could undermine such a market.

A major sticking point, delegates eventually agreed Saturday to kick the issue down the road until next year.

One veteran observersaid that Poland's presidency at COP24 had left many countries out of the process and presented at-risk nations with a "take it or leave it" deal. Progress had "been held up by Brazil, when it should have been held up by the small islands. It's tragic."

One of the largest disappointments for countries of all wealths and sizes was the lack of ambition to reduce emissions shown in the final COP24 text.

Most nations wanted the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to form a key part of future planning.

## Iraq to rebuild iconic Mosul mosque

### Mosul, Iraq

Iraqis yesterday laid the cornerstone for rebuilding Mosul's Al-Nuri mosque and leaning minaret, national emblems destroyed last year in the ferocious battle against the Islamic State group.

The famed 12th century mosque and minaret, dubbed Al-Hadba or "the hunchback," hosted Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's only public appearance as IS chief, when he declared a self-styled "caliphate" after the jihadists swept into Mosul in 2014.

The structures were ravaged three years later in the final, most brutal stages of the months-long fight to rid Iraq's second city of IS. Yesterday, dozens of government officials, religious figures, United Nations representatives and European ambassadors gathered in the large square in front of the battered mosque to see the foundation laid.

Abu Bakr Kanaan, the head of Sunni Muslim endowments in Nineveh province, set down the stone in a simple ceremony.

It bore a black Arabic inscription: "This cornerstone for the rebuilding and restoration of the Al-Hadba minaret and the Great Al-Nuri Mosque was laid on December 16, 2018."

More than a year after IS lost control of Mosul, the iconic mosque still lies in ruins. The stone gate leading up to its courtyard and the greenish dome now covered in graffiti are virtually the only parts still erect.

All that is left of the minaret is part of its rectangular base, the rest of it sheared off by fighting.

Kanaan said remnants of the minaret would be preserved, while other parts of the mosque would be built afresh, along with a museum about its history and adjacent homes.



A picture taken on December 16, 2018, shows the Great Mosque of al-Nuri and the remains of "Al-Hadba" leaning minaret in Mosul's war-ravaged Old City, during the placing of the corner stone ceremony.



Abu Bakr Kanaan (2nd-R), the head of Sunni Muslim endowments in the province, places the cornerstone

## Quake rocks Indonesia's Papua

### Jakarta, Indonesia

A 6.1-magnitude earthquake hit Papua, in eastern Indonesia Sunday, US seismologists said, but no tsunami warning was issued.

The quake was about 158 kilometres (98 miles) south-southwest of the province's capital Jayapura at 6:42 pm (0942 GMT), at a depth of 61 kilometres, according to the

US Geological Survey.

The quake was felt in Jayapura, but residents didn't panic, a military spokesman said.

"I felt it at home," Papua's military spokesman in Jayapura Dax Sianturi said.

Officials are still assessing the impact of the quake, but there were no immediate reports of casualties.

## Car bomb kills 8 people in Afrin



Picture courtesy of yenisafak

### Beirut, Lebanon

A car bomb killed at least eight people including four civilians near a pro-Turkey rebel post in the northern Syrian city of Afrin yesterday, a British-based war monitor said. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said it was not clear who was behind the blast in the city, which was seized from Kurdish forces

earlier this year.

The explosion comes after the Turkish president on Wednesday threatened to launch a new offensive against the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in Syria.

"The car bomb exploded near a position of pro-Turkey fighters" in a market, killing four civilians and four fighters, Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said.