

Report on AALCO Climate Change Seminar on:

Climate Change: Post-Kyoto International Climate Policy

The Asian African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) had organized a Seminar on the theme “*Climate Change: Post-Kyoto International Climate Policy*” on 16th January 2013 at the AALCO Headquarters at New Delhi. The Seminar was conducted on the main theme Post-Kyoto International Climate Policy and was attended by the Officials from many of the Member States of AALCO, academicians from reputed Universities (both in India and from abroad) international law researchers and students from few Universities. The seminar was divided into two Substantive Sessions (besides an Inaugural Session) to discuss two engaging themes, namely the ‘*Science and Economics of Climate Change*’ and ‘*The Legal and Policy Response*’.

At the *Inaugural Session*, the Secretary General of AALCO **Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad** delivered the Welcome Remarks that stressed the importance of tackling the challenge of climate change that has had and continues to have many adverse consequences for the human race. While highlighting the work of AALCO in the area of climate change over the years, he mentioned that the Organization would continue to conduct seminars with a view to identify the problems that are thrown up by climate change and to try to resolve them in a manner compatible with the historical responsibilities for the emission.

The Key Note address, which was delivered by **Prof. Chia-Jui-Cheng**, Secretary-General, Xiamen Academy of International Law & Professor, School of Law, Soochow University, Taipei, China, focused on ‘*International Trade Implication and Climate Change*’. While tracing the several links existing between the climate change and trade, he was of the opinion that trade policy could be used to support climate change action. Given the international trade dimensions climate change policy, he stressed the need to conceive a more positive relationship between the two that would be appropriate to deal with the issue of climate change.

The Inaugural Address, which was delivered by **Prof. Dr. Bharat H. Desai**, Professor of International Environmental Law, Center for International Legal Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi focused on ‘*Making Sense of Post-2012 Climate Change Regulatory Process: Some Reflection*’. This was a comprehensive presentation that dealt with numerous aspects relating to climate change, including historical issues, the legal regime of climate change and the problems with it, the concerns of the developing countries and the politics of developed countries in this area. While outlining the main pillars of the United Nations Framework

Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), he stated that the principle of 'Common but Differentiated Responsibility' was an important component of the regime and in this regard, he highlighted the efforts of the developed countries to scuttle this principle. While emphasizing the need for adhering to equity in regard to the problem of climate change, he stressed that this demanded that the developed countries take the lead. At the end of the Inaugural Session **Dr. Hassan Soleimani**, Deputy Secretary General, AALCO delivered the Vote of Thanks.

The **First Substantive Session** was on the theme “**Science and Economics of Climate Change**” and it was chaired by Mr. Narinder Singh, Secretary-General of the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi. At this Session three presentations were made.

The first one was that of **Dr. Archana Negi**, Assistant Professor, Center for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament (CIPOD) Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi who spoke on ‘*Post-Kyoto Regime and Second Commitment period*’. While giving an overview of the first Commitment period and the tricky issues involved in that which ended in 2012, she stated that due to the free rider problem that climate change involves, she was of the opinion that there was no optimistic future as far as the second commitment period is concerned.

The second presentation, which was made by **Dr. Yasukata Fukahori**, Deputy Secretary-General, AALCO, focused on ‘*Science and Economics of Climate Change*’. While dwelling on the *scientific* evidences available to prove that the problem of climate change is a real one, he brought home the figures that States have been emitting over the years. While stating that there is an urgent need to tackle the issue of climate change, he went on to add that commitments entered into by the countries needed to be adhered to to be able to mitigate the problem of climate change.

The third presentation was made by **Dr. Anwar Sadat**, Assistant Professor, Indian Society of International Law (ISIL), New Delhi who spoke on ‘*Green Climate Fund: Developing Country’s perspective*’. While noting that the problem of climate change posed an existential threat to human kind, he stated that the four important components of climate regime included, , finance, mitigation, adaptation and transfer of technology. Brining home the importance of Finance, he stated that we needed finance for many things in relation to climate change; we need it to mitigate green house gases; to cope with the consequences of climate change; to purchase environment-friendly technology. He also stated that the entire regime could be held to ransom if sufficient finances are not provided.

The ***Second Substantive Session*** was on theme “***Legal and Policy Response***”, and this session was chaired by Mr. Feng Qinghu, Deputy Secretary General of AALCO. There were three presentations made at this Session.

The first one was by ***Ms. Shannu Narayan***, Legal Officer, AALCO who spoke on the theme ‘*International Legal Framework on Climate Change*’. While highlighting the salient features of the legal regime on the climate change, she brought attention to some of the vital principles of the regime, namely the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, precautionary principle and others. She was of the view that the historical emission of the green house gases by the industrialized countries meant that they need to take the lead in addressing the issues thrown open by the problem of climate change.

The next presentation was made by ***Mr. Shiju*** Lecturer, Department of Policy Studies, the Energy Resource Institute (TERI), New Delhi who spoke on the theme ‘*Role of IPCC and Scientific Assessment*’. While dwelling on the scientific research carried out by the IPCC and the research being undertaken by its various Working Groups, he stated that there are hundreds and hundreds of authors who are involved in the preparation of the Report. He also added that all these authors are contributing on a voluntary basis and that they are not paid at all. Once a Report is ready, it is reviewed and then it is also subject to expert review.

The last presentation was made by ***Dr. Luther M. Rangreji***, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Legal Studies, South Asian University, (SAU), New Delhi who spoke on the theme ‘*Post-Doha Conference: An Insight into legal and Political Dialogues*’. While dwelling at length what he called the international politics of climate change, he also spoke about the issues that the drafters or negotiators of various countries take into account from 2013 to 2015 when adopting a new instrument on climate change. In his view one of the major challenges facing states with regard to the climate regime was the question: how to mainstream climate change concerns into their social, economic and developmental policies. The three presentations were followed by an interesting Q/A session.

In the ***Concluding Session***, the Vote of Thanks was proposed by Mr. Feng Qinghu, Deputy Secretary General, AALCO who thank all the experts, participants and the staffs of the AALCO Secretariat for making the Seminar a huge success.