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### **Unfinished Climate Business: Rich/Poor Divide**

Debate on how to limit carbon pollution across the globe ended with a deal that failed to resolve the toughest debate: how to narrow the divide between industrialized countries and poor ones that believe they need fossil fuels to help expand their economies.

Diplomats at the UN talks in Peru agreed on the data they'll provide in the first quarter to support emissions goals for a pact to be signed in Paris in December. The discussions ran more than 30 hours overtime as nations fought about how to differentiate between those who've become rich on the back of burning fossil fuels and those who say they need cheap energy to develop. "The fact that it was so tough to deliver some modest procedural steps is a taste of how difficult a substantive deal will be next year," Elliot Diringer, executive vice president of the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, said. "It keeps us on track for Paris but signals a tough year ahead." Next year's goal is to bring all nations, rich and poor alike, into a deal that will limit pollution everywhere for the first time. The meeting in Lima, which began with a sense of momentum after the U.S. and China jointly announced emission limits in November, failed to lock in binding requirements to make transparent the actions that countries such as India, the third largest polluter, will take to restrict fossil fuel use.

**May vs. Shall** The decision only describes the elements nations "may" report to demonstrate their commitment to limit emissions. An earlier version of the text used the word "shall," which suggested more bite to the rules. The Lima decision also emphasized the "common, but differentiated responsibilities" of countries, a phrase that dates back to the 1992 convention that governs the talks. Nations such as China and India interpret it as placing the burden to act on the rich, while industrial countries say it's being used by the developing ones as an excuse not to act. "This is a good starting point for Paris," Indian Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said. "All have accommodated each other. This needs to be taken further. Differentiation has come." Efforts at Lima to install a system for reviewing those pledges and pushing for more ambitious cuts were stripped out of the final document. That opened new questions about whether the UN will be able to use government agreements to reach climate goals that have been identified by scientists.



**'Show and Tell'** "This whole show-and-tell process that we've created here is still an optional arrangement," Ian Fry, an envoy for the tiny Pacific island nation of Tuvalu, said. "Countries can just pick and choose what they want to report on." Tuvalu and other low-lying island nations want all the biggest polluters, developed and developing alike, to rapidly reduce emissions. They're alarmed global warming will boost sea levels and swamp their atolls. "The thing that we're not seeing in here and that we're not seeing at the highest levels of government is the commitment we saw mobilized when we wanted to save the global financial system," Samantha Smith, who follows the talks for the environmental group WWF, said in Lima. "If we don't get stronger actions, we will get very dangerous climate change."

**Paris Elements** The decision adopted in Lima also references a separate document that incorporates "elements" of a deal that will morph into the Paris agreement. They set themselves a deadline of May to produce a first draft of the Paris text. In a third paper dealing with finance, richer countries reiterated a goal to provide \$100 billion a year in climate aid by 2020. "Finance is absolutely critical," Winnie Byanyima, executive director of Oxfam, said. "Without resources being committed to support developing countries to adapt to climate change and to move onto a low carbon path, there can be no agreement." The talks are part of a process begun three years ago to apply pollution limits on all nations, not just the industrial countries covered by the Kyoto Protocol. Since that treaty was signed in 1997, China surpassed the U.S. as the world's biggest emitter, and India jumped to third. Both are classified as developing countries exempt from restrictions. Kyoto's limits expire in 2020 and will be replaced by the Paris deal. **Check our website at [www.carmelitengo.org](http://www.carmelitengo.org)**