

Durban streets scream for climate justice

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Thousands of protesters descended near the venue of climate change negotiations in the South African city of Durban demanding prompt action from the developed countries to save the Earth from the perils of climate change.

The International Convention Centre environs bustled with demonstrators as they moved around the tightly-guarded negotiation venue carrying placards and shouting slogans as representatives from 195 countries gathered for the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which kicked off on Novem-

ber 29. The conclave is expected to make major decisions to tackle climate change by the end of the coming week.

Protesters, mostly from NGOs from around the world, accused negotiators, especially from developed countries, of not taking climate change, a growing global threat, seriously. "It's been about two decades of talks and these people are still negotiating. We need action, not words," said 58-year-old Mouleseng of South Africa.

"We are the victims and we know the solutions to tackle climate change. So, leaders should come to us and



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A participant at a rally in Durban.

take our advice rather than talking in halls," said Sofuti Bahle, a young South African activist.

The environment or forests ministers will attend the high-level meeting next week, but negotiating teams have already started talks on each and every aspect of climate change.

Acknowledging change in the Earth's climate and its adverse effects are a common concern of humankind, countries endorsed an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in 1992 to consider what they can do to limit average

global temperature increases and the resulting climate change, and to cope with whatever impacts were, by then, inevitable.

With the Kyoto protocol, promulgated in 1997 to reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide, the causative agent of global warming, phasing out in 2012, the countries are negotiating the future course.

During the protests, most of the demonstrators were demanding stronger commitments from the developed countries, including the US, to reduce emissions as part of the second phase of the Kyoto protocol, a demand from Nepal and other developing countries that has fallen on the developed world's deaf ears.