Takeaways from the Bonn Conference - CoP 23 - II

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What is the issue?

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Despite some notable positive outcomes, the CoP 23 in Bonn, Germany has left unaddressed certain key areas of contention including financial support, loss and damage, and fossil fuel use.

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What are the continuing contentions?

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- **Loss and Damage** - In Warsaw, Poland, COP-19, 2013 established the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.
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- This was in relation with the key obligations to be fulfilled by big emitters for the economic and non-economic losses of climate change.
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- It intended at addressing the destruction likely from climate change, including extreme events (such as severe storms) and slow-onset events (such as sea-level rise).
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- The Paris Agreement also recognises loss and damage and calls for enhanced action and support from the parties.
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- However, in CoP 23, loss and damage was not included in the agenda for the Paris rule book.
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- The rule book intends to provide operational guidance for fulfilling the ambition of the Paris Agreement and providing clarity on countries' efforts to reach the global goal.
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- It has to be finalised by 2018, according to the Paris Agreement's timeline.

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- There are no funds yet on loss and damage and the discussion on this has been postponed to 2018.
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- This was rightly a big bone of contention with poor and developing economies.
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- **Finance and Technology** - Another aspect of support from rich countries is about providing finance, technology, and building capacity for poorer countries.
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- This is intended both to protect themselves from the effects of climate change and to help them move along a low-carbon pathway.
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- Without these support means for implementation, the targets set by each country in Paris are hard to achieve.
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- The earlier promise of $100 billion each year by 2020 into the Green Climate Fund has also not seen much inflow to meet the goal.
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- Sadly, COP-23 did not result in any substantial agreements on financial support.
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- Important decisions on the key issue of finance were moved forward to be discussed at the next meeting to be held in Katowice, Poland in 2018.
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- **Emissions** - The science on climate change has not been given focus in CoP 23.
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- Greenhouse gas emissions appeared to have stabilised for the past few years, probably due to some economic reasons.
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- However, emissions rose by 2 % in 2017 perhaps due to additional electricity drawn from coal power plants in China.
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- The key question of when coal will be phased out globally has gone unaddressed in the meeting.
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- Clearly, greater focus on bringing down fossil fuels use is needed, for the Paris Agreement to be successful.
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Source: The Hindu

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