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What have the negotiations in Bonn brought?

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Negotiations on the new climate agreement closed on Friday in Bonn. What have we achieved in these 5 days of negotiations? Where do we stand, just a few months out from Paris and what challenges remain to be solved?

Firstly, the co-chairs of the negotiations, Ahmed Djoghlaoui and Daniel Reifsnyder received a further confirmation of their legitimacy to help lead the negotiations. Despite some rumblings of discontent at the beginning of the session, parties got straight down to business, on the basis of the text that the chairs had prepared (the so-called '[co-chairs](#)'

[tool](#)').

It should not be forgotten that three months before Copenhagen, the process was floundering without a legitimate, accepted text from the chair of the negotiation on which to launch serious negotiations. That is not the case here, and constitutes in itself important progress. Indeed, we can note that some co-facilitators in some of the more specialist, thematic negotiation groups (on adaptation, mitigation, finance, etc.) have been proactive in pushing forward their discussions, proposing draft pieces of text and ways of bridging positions. However, not all thematic groups have moved forward at the same pace and a lot of work remains to be done. It is still encouraging for the process that the role of the co-facilitators has been accepted; and their intimate knowledge of Parties' positions regarding their issue area forms a strong basis for the negotiations towards Paris.

Secondly, substantive progress has been made, in some areas, even if this has not yet been directly translated into text. In this regard, we can highlight the growing consensus around the idea of five year 'cycles' under which each country would come forward with new, stronger emissions targets, as well as further actions on adaptation and finance (an idea we have explored in [a recent paper](#)). This is a crucial part of the Paris agreement, and one where countries previously held highly divergent positions. It is not yet 'in the bag', but substantive progress has been made.

Likewise, there seems to be growing consensus that the agreement should contain some kind of global goal related to finance, namely an acknowledgement that addressing climate change requires shifting investment across the whole economy, and is not just a question of public finance (see IDDRI's [recent paper](#)).

On workstream 2 (the discussions related to pre-2020 action), consensus emerged around a reinforced role and a reformed technical examination process that would strengthen connections with the bodies, initiatives and actors outside the Convention to improve coordination and catalyse action, including potentially on adaptation. This would also be helpful to ensure the durability of the process launch by France, Peru, the UN Secretary-General and the UNFCCC secretariat, to encourage climate actions from all types of actors for COP21 (called the "Lima Paris Action Agenda").

Such progress is encouraging. However, the pace of negotiations is troubling. Just three months remain to Paris. In the mid-week stocktaking plenary, Parties were almost unanimous in acknowledging that although negotiations had accelerated, progress was insufficient. There were divisions on the way forward, however. Some, probably the majority, called essentially for the co-chairs to come back with a second draft text before the next negotiation session in Bonn in October 2015. This could go further than the existing 'co-chairs tool', being drafted in legal language and taking the form of a draft agreement. Others called for Parties to take the responsibility to transform the co-chairs tool into a draft agreement through laborious textual negotiations. It seems likely that the balance of views will favour the first option. Indeed, history shows that agreement requires a judicious combination of Parties' negotiations and active facilitation on the part of the chairs.

This session has been important therefore in moving forward the substance, but also in giving the chairs confidence, firstly, that Parties want them to provide a new text. Secondly, the session and the gruelling work in the small thematic groups has given the chairs the confidence that they know in such detail the positions of Parties that they can 'thread the needle' and provide an ambitious new text as a basis for parties to negotiate in Bonn.