Reflections from Bonn: paving the road to Belém

The June 2025 UN climate talks in Bonn (62nd sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies, SB62) concluded without significant breakthroughs, but with growing consensus on one critical point: the climate negotiation process itself is in need of serious reform. Taking place against the backdrop of disappointment at Baku and global political uncertainty, SB62 served as a moment of pause and in some ways, recalibration on the road to COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

One of the clearest signals from SB62 was that the current structure of international climate negotiations may no longer be fit for purpose. The Brazilian COP30 presidency formally invited parties to reflect on how to make negotiations more effective, including trimming overloaded agendas and streamlining discussion tracks. This recognition of structural fatigue suggests that process reform could become a defining theme of COP30, especially for youth, civil society and non-state actors.

Two key negotiating points in Bonn:

- Climate commitments: SB62 highlighted the persistent gap between the urgency of the climate crisis and the pace of international response. The session was marked by delayed proceedings and disputes over the agenda, particularly regarding proposals from Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) on trade-related measures and finance obligations. The lack of progress on scaling up support for developing countries continues to undermine trust. As Parties prepare their next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) ahead of COP30, behind schedule compared to the original deadline of February 2025 - now extended to September 2025 -, concerns remain about the credibility and ambition of future commitments, especially without clear signals on finance and implementation of the Baku-Belém Roadmap to $ 1.3 trillion annually by 2035.

- COP29 finance commitments: Negotiations at SB62 reflected ongoing tensions around climate finance, particularly in light of the inadequate financial commitments resulting from COP29. Disagreements over the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) continue to strain trust between developed and developing countries, with discussions delayed by disputes over trade-related measures and unmet finance pledges. The failure to secure credible signals on scaling up finance, especially for adaptation and loss and damage, risks undermining the credibility of the above-mentioned Baku-Belém Roadmap on finance goals.

Looking ahead to COP30

With COP30 fast approaching, youth demand a clear and ambitious roadmap that bridges negotiations with real-world climate action. As the Brazilian Presidency shapes the COP agenda, young people must be meaningfully involved in shaping both negotiated outcomes and implementation efforts. The next round of NDCs must reflect the urgency of the climate crisis and address the ambition gap that the upcoming Synthesis Report is likely to highlight. From finance to just transition, we urge leaders to seize every opportunity – from the UNGA to the COP Leaders' Summit – to step up their commitments, address divisions, and ensure COP30 delivers a credible path toward climate justice and a livable future for all.