

# افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد  
بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد  
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم  
از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

[Binoy Kampmark](#)

22.11.2024

## **Thank You for Emitting: The Hypocrisies of COP29**



Photograph Source: IAEA Imagebank – [CC BY 2.0](#)

COP29 was always going to be memorable, for no other reason than the hosting country, Azerbaijan, is a petrostate indifferent to the issue of emissions and scornful of ecological preachers. It has seen its natural gas supply grow by 128% between 2000 and 2021. Between 2006 and 2021, gas exports rose by a monumental 29,290%. A dizzying 95% of the country's exports are made up of oil and gas, with much of its wealth failing to trickle down to the rest of the populace.

The broadly described West, as stated by President Ilham Aliyev in his opening address to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, was in no position to be lecturing his country about cutting back on the use of fossil fuels. They were, he grandly claimed, “a gift from God”. In this, he should have

surprised no one. In April 2024, he [declared](#) that, as a leader of a country “which is rich in fossil fuels, of course, we will defend the right of these countries to continue investments and to continue production.”

A few days later, Aliyev played the other side of the climate change divide, [suggesting](#) at a meeting with island leaders that France and the Netherlands had been responsible for “brutally” suppressing the “voices” of communities in such overseas territories as Mayotte and Curaçao concerned with climate change. (Aliyev himself is no stranger to suppressing, with dedicated brutality, voices of dissent within his own country.) This proved too much for France’s Ecological Transition Minister, Agnès Pannier-Runacher, who cancelled her planned attendance to the summit [while attacking](#) Baku for “instrumentalising the fight against climate change for its undignified personal agenda.”

On the second day of the summit, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, tried to turn the attention of delegates to the urgent matter at hand. “The sound you hear is the ticking clock – we are in the final countdown to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C, and time is not on our side.” Others, however, heard the sound of money changing hands, with the fossil fuel industry lurking, fangs and pens at the ready, presided over by the good offices of a petrostate.

In the background lie assessments of gloomy inevitability. The Climate Change Tracker’s November 2024 [briefing](#) notes this year was one characterised by “minimal progress, with almost no new national climate change targets (NDCs) or net zero pledges even though government have agreed to (urgently) strengthen their 2030 targets and to align them with the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement.”

As easy as it is to rage against the opportunistic Aliyev, who crudely [blends environmentalism with ethnic cleansing](#), few attending the summit in Baku come with clean hands. As with previous COP events, Baku offers another enormous event of emitters and emission, featuring tens of thousands of officials, advisors and minders bloviating in conference. That said, the 67,000 registrants at this conference is somewhat lower compared with the 83,000 who descended on Dubai at COP28.

The plane tracking website FlightRadar24 [noted](#) that 65 private jets landed in the Azerbaijani capital prior to the summit, prompting Alethea Warrington, the head of energy, aviation and heat at Possible, a climate action charity, to tut with heavy disapproval: “Travelling by private jet is a horrendous waste of the world’s scarce remaining carbon budget, with each journey producing more emissions in a few hours than the average person around the world emits in an entire year.”

COP29 is also another opportunity to strike deals that have little to do with reducing emissions and everything to do with advancing the interests of lobby groups and companies in the energy market, much of it of a fossil fuel nature. In the spirit of Dubai, COP29 is set to follow in the footsteps of the wily Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, who chaired COP28 in Dubai. Prior to the arrival of the chatterati of climate change last year, the Sultan was shown in [leaked briefing documents](#) to the BBC and the Centre for Climate Reporting (CCR) to be an avid enthusiast for advancing the business of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (Adnoc). It was hard to avoid the glaring fact that Al Jaber is also the CEO of Adnoc.

The documents in question involve over 150 pages of briefings prepared by the COP28 team for meetings with Jaber and various interested parties held between July and October this year. They point to plans to raise matters of commercial interest with as many as 30 countries. The CCR [confirms](#) “that on at least one occasion a nation followed up on commercial discussions brought up in a meeting with Al Jaber; a source with knowledge of discussions also told CCR that Adnoc’s business interests were allegedly raised during a meeting with another country.”

The COP29 chairman, Samir Nuriyev, had already [put out feelers](#) as early as March this year that a “fair approach” was needed when approaching countries abundant with oil and natural gas, notably in light of their purported environmental policies. He went so far as to argue that Azerbaijan was an ideal interlocutor between the Global South and Global North. His colleague and chief executive of the COP29 team, Elnur Soltanov, showed exactly how that process would work in a [secret recording](#) ahead of the conference in which he discusses “investment opportunities” in the state oil and gas company with a person posing as a potential investor. (The person in question purported to be representing a fictitious Hong Kong investment firm with a sharp line in energy.) “We have a lot of gas fields that are to be developed,” Soltanov insists. “We will have a certain amount of oil and gas being produced, perhaps forever.”

In many ways, the Baku gathering has all the hallmarks of a criminal syndicate meeting, held under more open conditions. Fair play, then, to the Azerbaijani hosts for working out the climate change racket, taking the lead from Dubai last year. Aliyev and company noted months in advance that this was less a case of being a theatre of the absurd than a forum for business. And so, it is proving to be.

*Binoy Kampmark was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge.  
He lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne. Email: [bkampmark@gmail.com](mailto:bkampmark@gmail.com)*

NOVEMBER 21, 2024