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The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the annual decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which aims to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The 29th meeting, COP29, would be a continuation of these efforts.

At COP29, representatives from nearly 200 countries would convene to discuss their nations' progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change. The event would be characterized by complex negotiations, as countries work to reconcile their varying economic situations, vulnerabilities to climate impacts, and capacities to reduce emissions.

One focal point of COP29 would likely be the assessment of countries' progress toward their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), individual countries' goals for reducing emissions under the Paris Agreement. As the Paris Agreement calls for a global temperature increase well below 2 degrees Celsius and efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the adequacy of these NDCs in reaching these targets would be a critical point of discussion.

Another probable emphasis at COP29 would be the ongoing commitment by developed nations to mobilize \$100 billion annually in climate finance to support developing nations by 2020, and a plan to increase this amount after 2025. The realization of these financial commitments and the accessibility and distribution of these funds, particularly for adaptation measures, would be key themes.

The evolving science of climate change would also feature prominently. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) would likely present updated reports reflecting the latest research on the state of the climate, potential impacts of different levels of global warming, and opportunities for mitigation and adaptation.

The process of 'Loss and Damage,' dealing with impacts of climate change that go beyond what it is possible to adapt to, would also be on the table. Discussions would revolve around the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM), its function, and potential funding structures.

Civil society, including NGOs, indigenous groups, and youth activists, would play a crucial role at COP29, both inside and outside the negotiations. Their voices would continue to pressure world leaders to act more swiftly and ambitiously in the face of an escalating climate crisis.

Lastly, in the spirit of the Paris Agreement's 'ratchet mechanism', which requires countries to enhance their NDCs every five years, COP29 would provide a forum for countries to present more ambitious climate targets.

In sum, COP29 would be a platform for collaborative climate action, dialogue, and accountability, where nations work together to confront the shared challenge of climate change. It would serve as a crucial juncture to assess global progress and ensure the world remains on track to limit global warming and its devastating impacts.

Questions for Discussion

1. Are the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) from individual countries sufficient to meet the targets set in the Paris Agreement, particularly limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels?
2. How can developed countries better support developing nations in their climate action efforts, both in terms of finance and technology transfer?
3. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected international cooperation on climate change, and what can be done to ensure that recovery efforts are aligned with sustainability goals?
4. How should the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM) be funded, and how can it effectively address the irreversible impacts of climate change in the most vulnerable countries?
5. Given the increasing global awareness and activism, particularly among younger generations, how can civil society be more effectively involved in the decision-making process at COP meetings and in global climate action?