

Defend suffering masses, CSOs urge African negotiators after the failure to include region's special needs and circumstances on COP27 agenda

Statement by more than 1000 African CSOs spread across 51 countries under the auspices of the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)

Sharm el-Sheikh, 07 Nov 2022

We are outraged that discussions on Africa's special needs and circumstances have been dropped from the agenda of COP27. The development sets the stage for another COP that will fail millions of Africans dying unjustly from the adverse impacts of climate change and strengthen big polluters to continue ruining the planet with impunity.

Consequently, we call on the COP27 President, the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Shoukry, as the bearer of the aspirations of the African people to put his foot down and ensure we do not lose on other fronts. And urge the African Union Commission, through the Committee of African Heads of State on Climate Change, to meet urgently to unite African voices and reassess the future of Africa in UNFCCC processes.

Africa is a region with special needs and circumstances under international climate law¹. The region suffers more server climate change impacts than most parts of the world mainly because it is exposed to unrivalled weather extremes; is heavily dependent on climate-sensitive sectors such as rain-fed agriculture for economic services and livelihoods and has the least capacity to respond adequately to climatic stresses due to chronic poverty. Because the continent is warming roughly 1.5 times faster than the global average, it is exposed to disproportionately severe impacts even at safe global warming threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius. As the least industrialised and lowest energy-consuming region of the world, Africa accounts for 4% of global emissions.

Recognising this exceptional blend of circumstances in international climate change negotiations is critical for raising climate action ambition, especially in prioritising the financing of adaptation and loss and damage. It singles the continent out from other developing regions and positions it for climate action that responds directly to its unique challenges, including and exceeding those it shares with other developing regions.

But efforts to implement this recognition have been unsuccessful despite the provisions of Article 4.1. (e) of the UNFCCC, which had been upheld in several COP decisions and reports until the Paris Agreement. In the meantime, Africa has suffered a heavy toll of impacts with loss and damage across

¹ Article 4.1. (e) of the UNFCCC

communities and critical development sectors. Every future model forecasts “widespread and severe impacts” on the continent, even with the best mitigation effort.

Addressing the climate crisis can only succeed if the international community addresses the climate injustices faced by Africa. After the failures of previous COPs to truly address this concern, COP27 presented a unique opportunity to put Africa at the centre of negotiations and decisions. It is now evident to us that this is no longer likely. We, therefore, call on African leaders to side with the suffering masses and take the bold decisions needed to safeguard their aspirations.

Media Contact

For more details, contact Fidele NIYIGABA, Communication and Knowledge Management Manager

Tel: +254743236888

Email: fidele.niyigaba@pacja.org