



Pan African Climate Justice Alliance

PRESS RELEASE

A Failure: COP28 further weakens the Paris Agreement

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Our worst fears have come to pass.

The Dubai Climate Change Conference ends with a predictably failed crescendo, and once again, the UNFCCC multilateral process has proved a mirage for millions of vulnerable people in Africa and the world over, whose aspirations, desires and expectations have been dashed.

COP28 has missed the opportunity to put the world on track to deeply reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the Paris Agreement target of keeping post-industrial revolution global mean temperature rise under 1.5 degrees Celsius at the turn of this century.

As we outlined during our initial and second press Conferences, we welcome the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund despite its “slap-on-the-face, peanut pledges”, but refuse to celebrate it since several issues – notably the extended timeframe to access the money – are yet to be resolved for the Fund to be of optimal use to communities at the frontline of climate change impacts.

Earlier this year, we warned that the outcome we are staring in the next couple of hours was inevitable after the host country, the United Arab Emirates (UEA) appointed an oil Executive, Sultan Al Jaber to preside over the negotiations. In addition to being indifferent, contentious and exhibiting don't-care attitude which have been captured in the media, Sultan Al Jaber has undeniably become an enabler, and foreseen the participation of the historic number of big polluters, promoters of false climate solutions and anti-climate corporate interests.

We have reason to believe that the Parties have surrendered, and /or ceded the negotiations to climate profiteers, profaners of justice and entertained the influence of ill-intentioned individuals whose vision is to derail and retard the global transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient, inclusive and ecologically-just development pathways. The continuation of this trend will, no doubt, undermine the spirit of the UN

Climate Convention, and the Paris Agreement and irreparably damage the imperatives of climate justice, with dire consequences to people, society and economies in Africa, further South and North.

After following the debates and negotiations over the last two weeks, we feel disappointed, unsettled and hopeless. Critical issues relevant to Africa and the collective desire to tackle the climate crisis - especially adaptation, adaptation finance and Global Goal on Adaptation - remain marginal and contentious. Less than 24 hours before the closure of COP28, close to 70% of negotiation items remain open, thus demonstrating a lack of commitment and a sense of urgency to move the process towards positive outcomes.

We note:

- *On the phasing-out of fossil fuels.*

Phasing out fossil fuels, the single most significant action needed to limit the emissions of most greenhouse gases and reverse global warming looks like a muzzled conversation in COP28 despite evidence generated in the Global Stock Take Process. Business interests side-stepped the imperative of keeping the mean global temperatures rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius and creating a resilient globe, especially for communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis. Beyond exploring further commercial interests through scaling renewables, which we obviously support, and paving the way for land and forest grabbing through bilateral deals ostensibly pursuant to carbon trading, Dubai will go into the annals of history as the COP which was equivocal in undermining rapid phaseout of fossil fuels – of course, aided by the oil-addicted President.

- *Securing Adaptation Agenda*

We lament the lack of a tangible outcome on the Global Goal on Adaptation and any strong commitments to “more than double” adaptation finance flows to Africa. COP28 generated a paltry \$156 million in pledges for adaptation finance, compared to Billions of Dollars pledged for mitigation-centric initiatives. But this falls short of the pledges made in Glasgow to double adaptation finance to \$40 billion annually.

Adaptation remains the single most important priority for Africa because of the disproportionate levels of vulnerabilities and adverse impacts on its populations and economies. The push for an aspirational Global Goal on Adaptation cannot be rationalized with a push for voluntary implementation of this goal, particularly with national-level leadership and without a strong commitment to global climate finance.

Furthermore, the decision to run a two-year program on the GGA, with yet another round of wasteful workshops, reveals a concerning lack of urgency in responding to communities that are in dire need of faster adaptation and resilience-building, local actions. It has become evident that developed countries are using delaying tactics to avoid fulfilling their commitment to provide the necessary climate funds for effective adaptation action.

- *Climate Finance*

We have repeatedly emphasized the importance of developed countries fulfilling their climate finance commitments. It should be noted that the current demands for climate finance are in billions of dollars annually, not just the previously pledged USD 100 billion, which OECD just indicated they have already

delivered – there is a difference between the money in Paper and what is tangibly felt and seen on the ground. Unfortunately, COP28 has not yet taken any significant action towards the Finance goal.

- *Loss and Damage*

We call for the application of the principle of *common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities* to include securing sustainable replenishment for the Fund and responsive access mechanisms for communities at the frontline of the crisis.

We urge developed countries to be transparent and accountable in demonstrating their contributions to the loss and damage kitty, instead of simply repackaging existing climate financing and/or ODA in their climate pledges. We believe that the Loss and Damage Fund, important as it is, should not be used as a distraction from critical issues of negotiations. Rather, it should be utilized to stimulate developed Nations' to take action in reducing emissions and increasing climate finance for adaptation.

- *On Global Stock Take:*

We were very clear in our call for action based on the evidence presented by the GST, which shows that global temperatures are reaching alarming levels and the gap in adaptation measures is widening. However, COP28 failed to use the scientific evidence generated by the UNFCCC to make progressive decisions.

We welcome the Just Transition Work Programme on the *just transition pathway* that paves the way for the design of a comprehensive programme. However, we insist on a transition that is sector-wide, graceful, fair, gender-responsive and equitable and that takes into account the socioeconomic and political realities of different regions, and nations, as well as the imperatives of climate justice. Just transition cannot be a super-highway for developed countries to unreasonably perpetuate and entrench their unfair economic and investment interests that have resulted in poverty, unemployment, mineral/resource conflicts, and more worse, bloodshed in Africa.

As we leave COP28, we want to reiterate our call for UNFCCC to take back control of the processes from the global oil cartels and purveyors of delays for action. These cartels are causing harm to the world and their commitment to taking restitutive actions and adapting to change remains questionable. Despite all the noise and grandstanding that took place over the last two weeks, there are only two actions that are critical to our survival: eliminating fossil fuels, deep emission cuts, particularly in industrialized countries with the largest emissions, and finding ways to help developing and vulnerable countries adapt and build resilience to the adverse effects of climate change.

We are dedicated to forging impactful alliances and partnerships to achieve climate justice in Africa and globally.

Notes to Editors:

We draw the attention of editors to our comprehensive resources on COP to be accessed through <https://cop.pacja.org/> and our overall position for COP that can be accessed through the site: [African Civil Society position- UNFCCC-COP28 - PACJA - Panafrican Climate Justice Alliance](#)