



PAN AFRICAN CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Why we oppose the Copenhagen Accord

The 2010 June intercessional meetings of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), traditionally held in Bonn every year since the establishment of the UNFCCC will be held on May 31 – June 11 2010. During these meetings, the Global community will once more try to iron out North-South differences that have kept at bay the prospects of building consensus on a comprehensive framework to defeat the challenge of climate change, regarded as the biggest threat to the survival of humanity and the planet in the 21st century. But as the Global community gathers in Bonn for the next two weeks, fatigued and disillusioned delegates from poor countries will be waiting for positive signals from their industrialized country counterparts to assure them that the forthcoming climate change summit in Mexico will deliver a truly people-driven and people-centred outcome.

The biggest threat facing the international climate change dialogue process, and more specifically poor communities in Africa, is the controversial *Copenhagen Accord*, the key outcome of the acrimonious Copenhagen climate change Summit which was held in Denmark late last year. The Copenhagen Accord threatens Africa's future. It was the result of an exclusive, un-transparent and undemocratic process involving around 28 countries selected by the Danish Government, which excluded over 160 countries.

Africa's position was supposed to have been defended by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia. But as it turned out, the Ethiopian Prime Minister annoyed and frustrated majority of African delegates when he departed from the common African position and instead stood with what the industrialized countries sought to achieve in the dialogue process. In addition to co-Chairing the UN High-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing that will work to mobilize the financing promised for climate change in Copenhagen with former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Zenawi is also the AU climate change coordinator, a position that further put into strain Africa's quest for a unified voice ahead of Mexico.

There is no doubt that the Copenhagen Accord falls far short of the African Group Position. It is an illegitimate document that was not mandated and ignores years of work in the legitimate UN processes. It was not adopted by the UN, is non-binding and has no legal standing or effect. More reasons why our governments should join us in rejecting the Copenhagen Accord are:

- The pledges included in the Accord would give rise to 3.9°C of global warming, implying around 6°C of warming in Africa. This is nothing less than genocide.
- The Accord's stated goal of 2°C is unacceptable to Africa, as it implies around 3 degrees of warming in all regions of Africa. As stated by Rev. Tutu "a global goal of about 2°C is to condemn Africa to incineration and no modern development".

The proposed review of a 1.5°C goal occurs too late to stabilize emissions at this level.

- The Accord threatens the Kyoto Protocol's legally binding targets for developed countries. It is merely a system of voluntary and unilateral pledges that does not include science-based aggregate target, legally binding individual targets for industrialized countries or effective compliance. It threatens to shift the burden of climate change to developing countries.
- The Accord fails to share the atmospheric space fairly. Inadequate pledges by Annex I countries (13-19% from 1990 levels by 2020) allow them to ignore historical responsibility and grab a disproportionate share of the remaining atmospheric space, denying it to Africa. This is climate colonialism. The African Group has called for cuts of 45% by 2020.
- The proposed \$10 billion in short-term financing for the period 2010 to 2012 is inadequate. This will not be “new and additional” to ODA. The African Group has called for short-term financing of \$400 billion, with \$150 billion immediately available as “special drawing rights”.
- The proposal to “mobilize” \$100 billion in longer-term financing is inadequate. There is no commitment to “provide” this finance from public sources. The amounts are insufficient to stabilize concentrations of carbon dioxide below 300ppm – a goal essential to Africa’s survival and prosperity. The African Group has called for longer term financing by Annex I countries equivalent to 5% of their GNP.
- The Accord’s proposed finance and technology mechanisms fail to ensure democratic, transparent and accountable governance of finances and technology transfer under authority of the Conference of Parties, as called for by the G77 and China.
- The Accord commits developing countries to new obligations regarding mitigation actions, without adequate finance and technology. It imposes more stringent emission reduction burdens on developing than developed countries.

The Accord undermines the UN process, the agreed principles of the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol, especially equity and common but differentiated responsibility, and threatens a deal under the UN that will truly safeguard Africa's future. Though many African Governments have already identified with the Accord due to prospects of funds, we continued to urge them to reconsider their stand so as not to lend legitimacy to a parallel process that would undermine both the UN and Africa’s interests.

The Accord, if implemented in its present form, would violate the human rights of millions of people in Africa. Already, the Accord is being used by some industrialized countries as a conditionality for financing climate-related projects in developing countries. Awfully, countries which have not identified with the Accord have been warned not to expect any finance from industrialized countries. Although the Accord is not yet a decision of the COP, experience of last months shows that it is being made a “tool of trade” by industrialized countries determined to force it into the throats of hapless poor countries. So as not to regret in future, all countries should return to the multilateral UN process, and build on the progress made before and during the Copenhagen meeting on the two tracks of the negotiations to implement the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, where the African Group is negotiating much higher levels of ambition.

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