



PACJA SUPPORTS US AND EU LAWMAKERS' CALL FOR UAE'S WITHDRAWAL OF OIL MOGUL AS COP28 PRESIDENT

Nairobi, Kenya, May 25, 2023

On May 23, 2023, Lawmakers from the European Parliament and the US Congress released a hard-hitting Statement where they added their voice to millions of others who have remained steadfast in urging the United Arab Emirates, the host of the UNFCCC-COP28, to withdraw Sultan Al Jaber as the COP President-Designate.

The letter, addressed to President Joe Biden of the United States, UN President Von der Leyen, and Secretary General Anthony Guterres, requested the leaders to urge the UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell, to address their profound concerns about the emerging trend where the UNFCCC negotiations have been captured by private sector polluters with undue influence over the process.

This letter is consistent with our foresighted statement released on January 12, 2023, rejecting the appointment of the Oil Chief as COP28 President.

PACJA, representing more than 1500 organisations from diverse backgrounds in 51 countries across Africa welcomes and wholly supports the statement from the EU and US parliamentarians, and seeks a response from the UNFCCC Executive Secretary without further delay. Indeed, we hope Simon Stiell will address the issues the Lawmakers raised before the Bonn Climate Change Conference scheduled for June 2023.

The excessive influence of the transnational corporations on climate negotiations, as decried by the 35 lawmakers from the United States and European Parliaments, has been enabled by the current rules of the UNFCCC which allow the fossil fuel industry and other corporate interests, despite their clear conflict of interest, to undermine the science and the goals of the Paris Agreement.

In addition to unconditionally withdrawing Sultan Al Jaber from this process, we also call for the following actions:

1. The withdrawal of the President-designate of COP28, Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, who has been criticized for his close ties with the fossil fuel industry and his alleged role in delaying climate action in his country.
2. The establishment of a robust conflict of interest policy that limits the participation and access of polluting industries, especially those whose business models are incompatible with the 1.5°C limit, at UNFCCC meetings and events.
3. We demand that fossil fuel companies and their lobby groups are excluded from official delegations, side events, sponsorships, and exhibitions.
4. The transparency and accountability of the UNFCCC processes, including the disclosure of financial and non-financial contributions from private sector entities and their representatives.
5. We request that all parties and observers report on their sources and amounts of funding from private sector actors and that this information is made publicly available.

We urge the UNFCCC Executive Secretary to take these steps as soon as possible to ensure that COP28 is a success and that the voices of the most vulnerable and affected communities are heard, respected, and not drowned by corporate interests.

We stand in solidarity with the millions of people around the world who are demanding climate justice and a livable future for all.

Dr. Mithika Mwenda,

Executive Director