



# Press Statement

## COP29: Africa Demands a Just and Urgent Response to the Climate Crisis

*Baku, Azerbaijan – 13 November 2024*—The African civil society under the auspices of the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), speaking at COP29, calls on the world’s leaders to deliver the climate action that Africa urgently needs. At this juncture, where the effects of climate change are intensifying, and global responses remain weak, we are here to demand action that reflects the true scale of this crisis, and aspirations of the people from the continent facing existential threat of the problem they did not create.

### **A Crisis Escalating and a World Watching**

Africa faces devastating impacts of climate change every day, from severe droughts, and devastating floods to crop decimation and millions' displacement. These threats are not new to the continent but are growing in intensity and frequency, turning vulnerable regions into frontlines of climate change that threaten the survival of entire communities. The scientific consensus warns of even greater challenges if the international community does not make deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and provide the resources needed to adapt.

And yet, global ambition remains deeply insufficient. Wealthy nations, responsible for the largest share of historical emissions, have repeatedly delayed meaningful action and fallen short on their promises of support. Financial commitments are vague or conditional, while carbon reduction pledges lack the bold targets required to limit warming. At COP29, we see a familiar story unfolding—an overwhelming need for action met with a lukewarm response from those with the means, international and moral obligation to do more.

This inaction is unacceptable, as the consequences will be catastrophic, especially for Africa. Projections show that left unaddressed, climate impacts could reduce Africa’s GDP by up to 4% by 2040 and by as much as 25% by 2100, pushing millions further into poverty and instability. Our continent’s call for ambitious climate finance, equitable adaptation support, and a commitment to a just transition must be heeded to avert these grim outcomes.

### **A call for justice, equity, and transparency**

Africa’s call for climate justice is grounded in several key principles that highlight the need for a significant shift in how global leaders tackle the climate crisis.

First and foremost, the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities emphasizes that developed countries hold a unique obligation to take the lead, considering their historical contributions to emissions. These nations are expected to provide essential support through finance, technology, and capacity-building initiatives, enabling vulnerable countries to adapt to climate changes and pursue sustainable development.

In addition, the principles of human rights and social equity dictate that climate action must be inclusive, ensuring the voices of all communities are heard, particularly those most affected by climate impacts. This includes protections for women, youth, and Indigenous groups whose rights and futures are at the greatest risk.

Moreover, transparency and accountability in climate finance cannot be overlooked. Funding should be structured as grants that are easily accessible to the nations that need it most, avoiding any arrangements that would increase debt burdens or impose conditionalities that compromise national sovereignty.

Lastly, the notion of intergenerational equity reinforces the idea that the decisions made today will profoundly impact the world of tomorrow. It is imperative that we take bold action to safeguard future generations from the escalating threats posed by a destabilized climate.

#### **Africa's Key Demands at COP29**

1. **Climate Finance:** Africa calls for an ambitious New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance, with a commitment of at least USD 1.3 trillion annually, delivered primarily as grants and reviewed regularly to reflect evolving needs and vulnerabilities. These funds must be accessible and responsive to African countries' specific needs and realities, supporting adaptation, mitigation, and resilience without driving debt or dependency. We denounce crippling loans to African countries as climate finance contribution by developed country parties.
2. **Loss and Damage:** We demand urgent increase in funding to the loss and Damage fund beyond the USD 700 million pledged and speedy disbursements from the fund. This fund must prioritise African communities bearing the brunt of climate disasters and establish Nairobi as the headquarters for the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage, enhancing Africa's access to support.
3. **Just Transition:** Africa's transition to a sustainable economy must be graceful, fair and people-centered, sector-wide addressing energy poverty, green industrialisation, and sustainable use of natural resources. Developed countries must remove trade barriers and ensure that border adjustment measures that were formulated without Africa's participation do not unfairly penalise African economies.
4. **Adaptation:** Whereas funding Africa's adaptation is estimated annually to cost USD 387 billion, PACJA calls for COP29 to deliver on needs-based adaptation finance that responds to actual needs on the ground and vulnerabilities of people, societies, and economies.

Adaptation financing for Africa must prioritise essential sectors, primarily agriculture, water, health and energy, and be accessible through straightforward mechanisms that support the communities most in need.

5. **Transparency and Accountability:** We demand clear, honest reporting on climate finance contributions and progress on emissions reductions by Developed Countries Parties. Developed countries must uphold their commitments transparently, while African civil society plays a central role in monitoring these processes to ensure resources reach the frontline communities.
6. **Mitigation:** Meeting the 1.5°C goal requires decisive emissions cuts. Developed countries must set ambitious targets for phasing out fossil fuels and reflect these targets in their NDCs. Africa has contributed the least to this crisis and cannot be left to bear the cost of others' emissions. To this end, priority actions in carbon markets must be recalibrated to further mitigation outcomes and not climate finance contribution to African countries.
7. **Recognizing Africa's Special Needs and Circumstances:** Call on COP 29 to launch work on the consideration of the special needs and special circumstances of Africa under the Paris Agreement in line with the relevant and previous decisions adopted by the COPs.

Africa at COP29 cannot afford to stand as an observer but as a continent with a clear, bold vision for a future built on justice and resilience. These demands are not only reasonable but essential for preventing the worst impacts of climate change. Anything less is a failure of our shared responsibility to each other and the planet.

## **Contact**

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