



# DECLARATION OF THE FOURTH AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON LOSS AND DAMAGE

Lilongwe, Malawi  
March 26-28, 2025

# 1. Preamble

The 4th African Regional Conference on Loss and Damage, aimed at providing a platform for Africa Stakeholders to develop strategies for accelerating mobilization, provision and access to climate finance for impactful locally led Loss and Damage and adaptation. It was convened in Lilongwe, Malawi, from March 26 to 28, 2025; and comprised of participants from African governments, civil society organizations, academia, private sector representatives, development partners, donor agencies, and frontline communities:

**Aware** that climate change is causing increasingly severe and irreversible damage to Africa's ecosystems, infrastructure, and livelihoods, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable communities despite their minimal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions.

**Alarmed** by the fact that African countries are losing between 5 – 15 percent of their GDP to climate change and extreme weather which has for over the past two decades costed developing economies more than \$525 billion, erasing years of development progress.

**Mindful** that African states have a vital role to play in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change proportional to the level of contribution to climate change.

**Recognizing** that the Paris Agreement, specifically Article 8, acknowledges the need to avert, minimize, and address loss and damage, yet the operationalization of climate finance mechanisms remains inadequate, with commitments failing to translate into accessible and responsive financial flows.

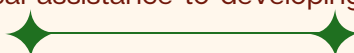
**Concerned** that while the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage was established at COP28, the current financial commitments remain insufficient, with only USD 765.59 million pledged, and less than half of these pledges yet mobilised, far below the estimated needs to address ongoing and future climate-induced damages in Africa.

**Disappointed** that COP29 failed to deliver an ambitious New Collective and Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance and failed to include an adequate and ambitious sub-goal for Loss and Damage despite the legal and human rights obligations of developed countries and the significant scale of the Loss and Damage needs of developing countries.

**Reflecting** on the historical responsibilities and systemic financial inequities in global climate finance, where Africa faces structural barriers to accessing funds, with a disproportionate reliance on loans rather than grants, further exacerbating existing debt burdens and limiting the capacity of nations to respond effectively to climate crises.

**Acknowledging** that loss and damage extend beyond economic impacts to include non-economic losses such as displacement, cultural heritage erosion, and psychological distress, which require holistic and inclusive approaches in climate response strategies.

**Further acknowledging** the technical capacity needed to avert, minimize, quantify, and report on loss and damage, and concerned that the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage is not operationalized to catalyze technical assistance to developing countries for addressing loss and damage.



**Affirming** that the nexus between adaptation and loss and damage must be strengthened, ensuring that locally led adaptation and loss and damage efforts are urgently and adequately financed and integrated into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), while also advocating for just and equitable financing mechanisms.

**Recalling** the previous edition of the Loss and Damage declaration, particularly the call for African countries to include the L&D in their next round of NDCs review, and the Long-term Emission Reduction Strategies, including providing cost estimates where possible, to drive predictable and adequate finance.

### **Declare as follows:**



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### **African Leadership to Leverage AU Reparations Momentum for Climate Debt Cancellation**

African leaders should build on the AU's push for reparations to advocate for bold global action on debt cancellation, particularly for climate-induced debts that burden the continent's response to climate induced loss and damage. **We therefore:**

- a). Call for equitable and flexible access to climate funds for African countries regardless of their prevailing fiscal circumstances for external borrowing.
- b). Unequivocally call for writing off of all climate related debts and accelerated non-debt inducing financing to repair key sectors damaged by losses and damages.

### **Adequate, Predictable, Flexible and Accessible Financing for Loss and Damage to Ensure that Impacted Communities Recover and Build Long Term Resilience.**



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#### **We call for:**

- a) Increased grant-based funding from United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change financial mechanisms including from international financial institutions and donors, rather than debt-driven mechanisms that exacerbate economic vulnerabilities in African countries.
- b) Accelerated access to climate finance for locally led Loss & Damage and Adaptation initiatives, ensuring they are sufficiently capitalized and easily accessible.
- c) Clear and inclusive strategies to be put in place to ensure loss and damage and adaptation projects and programmes are recognized and adequately funded.
- d) The Baku- Belem Roadmap to US\$1.3Trillion to address the failure of the NCQG to deliver long-term finance for Loss and Damage by putting in place a clear plan for developed countries to provide grants from public sources at a scale of hundreds of billions a year.

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### **A Call for Full Financial Support to the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage to Catalyse Provision of Technical Assistance from Organizations, Bodies, Networks, and Experts (OBNES)**

#### **We demand:**

- a) Active engagement by the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage with African governments and sub-national structures to strengthen capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and institutional support, ensuring the realization of local strategic Loss and Damage goals.
- b) Increased financial and technical resources to enhance the Santiago Network's effectiveness in delivering tangible support to affected communities in Africa
- c) Stronger collaboration to maximize the Santiago Network's impact in addressing loss and damage across Africa.

### **Ensuring Inclusive Climate Action and Decision-Making that is Responsive to Most Vulnerable, Including Children, Persons with Disabilities, Women, Youth and Other Marginalized Communities**

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#### **We advocate for**

- a) Inclusive climate policy and decision-making that ensures vulnerable populations, including women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities, are not only beneficiaries but active participants in shaping climate solutions.
- b) Climate responses and loss and damage frameworks that are designed to reflect the unique needs and challenges faced by these groups, ensuring equitable support and protection.
- c) The establishment of mechanisms by governments and international bodies to guarantee accessibility, capacity building, equity, meaningful participation and representation of disadvantaged groups in climate action discussions and funding allocations.

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### **Building the Africa we Want and Strengthening National and Regional Climate Responses**

- a) Incorporate social protection policies to cushion climate related disaster victims, ensuring that affected communities receive adequate support and resources to recover and rebuild.
- b) Urgently integrate loss and damage priorities in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to elevate Africa's negotiating position at COP30 and beyond.



- c) Prioritize fulfilling the unmet need for housing and development of sustainable, affordable, and resilient housing solutions that can help communities withstand climate shocks
- d) Be accountable, transparent and ensure that climate finance reaches the most vulnerable populations and is utilized effectively.
- e) Remove all bureaucratic hurdles that delay financial flows to the communities affected by climate change impacts to reflect the urgency in responding to loss and damage needs.
- f) Invest in African-led climate change research and innovation related to Loss & Damage to bridge data gaps.
- g) Invest in climate and weather observation systems to strengthen early warning systems and build evidence that informs loss and damage programming in Africa.

### **Pre-arranged Finance Modalities for Climate Change Adaptation and Loss and Damage Interventions**



To accelerate the implementation of locally led loss and damage response mechanisms and adaptation initiatives, we call for:

- a) A shift towards grant-based finance rather than loans, preventing further debt burdens on African nations responding to climate crises.
- b) A robust NCQG on climate finance that is responsive to Africa's loss and damage realities and structured to deliver effective adaptation benefits.
- c) Global Shield to upscale support to all African countries facing existential threat to loss and damage.
- d) Provision of flexible financing that support country-driven, country-owned, needs-based climate solutions.
- e) The Africa Risk Capacity to expand risk finance by establishing risk retention support mechanisms for African Countries.



### **Locally Led Adaptation and Response to Loss and Damage Foundational in UNFCCC Financial Mechanisms for Climate Action, Anchored in Country Ownership**

**We encourage**

- a) Documentation, replication and scaling up of successful locally led loss and damage initiatives and innovations across Africa



- b) Promotion of regional self-reliance in addressing loss and damage and ensure frontlines' communities have direct access to loss and damage finance mechanisms.
- c) The academic sector and research institutions collaborate strongly with governments to provide evidence-based methodologies for quantifying loss and damage and inform policies that enhance climate finance access.
- d) The need for UNFCCC financial mechanisms to recognize Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) and support its initiatives, ensuring that financing frameworks are inclusive and accessible to community-driven climate resilience efforts.
- e) Establish clear roadmap and guidelines for developing a clear definition for loss and damage within the UNFCCC mechanisms to catalyse common understanding



## **A Call for Just, Equitable and Accessible Climate Financing**

### **We call for**

- a) Developed nations to honour their financial commitments to mobilize and provide at least \$300 billion annually by 2030, as proposed under the NCQG and a clear plan to achieve at least, US\$1.3 trillion and US\$300 billion per year goals by 2035 with a clearly defined public finance component in grant equivalent terms must be developed.
- b) Multilateral financial institutions to simplify access to climate finance by reducing complex conditionalities that hinder African countries from securing much-needed resources.
- c) The establishment of a fair and transparent climate finance architecture that ensures direct access for frontline communities and prevents the dominance of intermediaries that slow down or misallocate funds.

## **Civil Society and Climate Justice Sector's Commitments for Action**



**In alignment with the principles of climate justice, loss and damage, equity, and locally led adaptation, we commit to:**

- a) Monitoring and tracking the implementation of this communique, assessing progress, and holding ourselves accountable to the commitments made, ensuring that actions align with the agreed priorities.



- c) Enhancing the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) within the negotiation rooms as part of national delegations, ensuring that frontline communities and grassroots voices are meaningfully represented in climate decision-making spaces.
- d) Strengthening Africa's unified voice in global climate negotiations through coordinated advocacy and evidence-based policy engagements.
- e) Develop robust national climate finance strategies that prioritize locally led adaptation and loss and damage interventions.
- f) Foster multi-stakeholder partnerships to scale up community-driven solutions that build resilience and recovery capacities.

**ADOPTED IN LILONGWE, MALAWI, ON THIS 28TH DAY OF MARCH 2025.**