From the ground up: Building Collective Strength, Fighting for Climate Justice

February 2023

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Published by:

IBON International
3rd Floor, IBON Center
114 Timog Avenue, Quezon City
1103 Philippines
Telefax: +632 9276981
Telephone: +632 9277060 to 61 local 203 and 207
Email: international@iboninternational.org
Website: www.iboninternational.org

This publication has been produced with the financial contributions of Medico International, Bread for the World, and Karibu Foundation. The views herein shall not necessarily be taken to reflect the official opinion of Medico International, Bread for the World, and Karibu Foundation.

Layout and Cover Design: Andrew Zarate

All photos are contributed by IBON International Climate Justice Program, People Rising for Climate Justice, Youth Advocates from Climate Action Philippines (YACAP), and Altermidya - People’s Alternative Media Network, used under relevant Creative Commons licenses.
Table of Contents

From the Ground Up: Building Collective Strength, Fighting for Climate Justice 9

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: a Postmortem Article on the Cop27 Outcomes 14

The People’s Struggle for Climate and Social Justice Amid Multiple Systemic Crises 23

CSO Caucus Issue Key Demands, Amplify Calls for System Change Towards Climate and Social Justice 28

Declaration of the Civil Society for Climate Justice 38

A Win for Frontline Peoples and Communities, but the Struggle Continues: 49

Ibon International Statement on Cop27 Decision to Establish a Loss and Damage Fund 51

The South Needs New Loss and Damage Funds, Not Rebadged Climate Finance, Aid 53
From the Ground Up: Building Collective Strength, Fighting for Climate Justice

In November 2022, representatives from over 190 countries trooped to Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt for the 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Considered the most important arena for global climate policymaking, the annual talks were hounded by issues of corporate greenwashing and the Egyptian presidency of COP27. Egypt is known for its abysmal human rights record and crackdown on civic space under the authoritarian government of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. The choice to hold it in the country was therefore severely criticised by climate activists.

In the resort city of Sharm El Sheikh, far from the urban centres in Egypt, climate activists were corralled into designated protest areas away from the people who need to hear their messages. Despite the challenges, civil society and people’s movements around the world mobilised both within the official spaces at COP27 and from outside to demand for climate justice. At COP27, the persistent struggle by civil society and people’s movements have led to the successful establishment of a fund to address loss and damage due to extreme weather and slow-onset events. Outside Egypt, IBON International, together with partners and allies, organised parallel people-led processes for civil society in Morocco and the Philippines, especially for those who were unable to attend COP27.

Many fights still lay ahead in COP28 to ensure that loss and damage finance will deliver climate justice to frontline communities across the developing world, not just in the most vulnerable countries. Moreover, developed countries insist on a “mosaic” of funding sources for loss and damage, including loans from private sources. Such financing arrangements will only add to the debt distress already suffered by many Southern countries still recovering from the pandemic. With an oil executive presiding over the climate talks in 2023, international solidarity is needed more than ever to carve alternative platforms and reclaim spaces, hold governments and corporations accountable, and assert the people’s demands for justice and equity in global climate policymaking.
IBON International expresses utmost gratitude to our partners and allies in this campaign: People Rising for Climate Justice (PRCJ), Youth Advocates for Climate Action - Philippines (YACAP), Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Espace Associatif, Moroccan Coalition for Climate Justice (CMJC), Social and Economic Policies Monitor (Al Marsad) – Palestine, Tunisian Forum for Social and Economic Rights (FTDES), Association Ribat Al Fath pour le Développement Durable, Zambia Social Forum, Gender Action, Third World Network, IBON Africa, GenderCC Southern Africa - Women For Climate Justice Network, Red Latinoamericana por Justicia Económica y Social (LATINDADD), Centre For Community Economics and Development Consultants Society (CECOEDECON), Enda Energie, LIFE e.V., WALHI Central Kalimantan (Friends of the Earth Indonesia), Serikat Perempuan Indonesia (SERUNI), National Federation of Small Fisherfolk Organization in the Philippines (PAMALAKAYA), Climate Change Network for Community-based Initiatives (CCNCI), Nicaraguan Network of Community Commerce (RENCIC), Marea Roja, Good Food Community, Journalists for Human Rights (JHR), and Altermidya - People’s Alternative Media Network. We especially thank Medico International, Karibu Foundation, and Bread for the World for their generous support.
“Many fights still lay ahead in COP28 to ensure that loss and damage finance will deliver climate justice to frontline communities across the developing world, not just in the most vulnerable countries.”
NO TO FALSE CLIMATE SOLUTIONS, END CLIMATE IMPERIALISM!

RISING JUSTICE

STOP THE ATTACK AGAINST PEOPLE AND THE PLANET
One step forward, two steps back: A Postmortem Article on the COP27 Outcomes

By Ivan Enrile, Climate Justice Programme Manager, and Jax Bongon, Climate Justice Policy Officer of IBON International

The 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held from November 6–18, 2022, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. The summit had varied outcomes, achieving some important progress on addressing climate change impacts but not without global North parties backtracking on their historic responsibilities and renegotiating Convention principles to shift the burden to Southern countries.

The second most-attended COP in history was on the brink of collapse, with most of the negotiation texts still in square brackets (meaning they were not agreed upon). Going into the last day of the extended conference, the Egyptian presidency managed to save face by delivering the outcome document "The Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan." It symbolised the efforts of the Egyptian presidency to reconcile some of the parties’ differences in hopes of achieving minimum agreements, particularly on the matter of disaster compensation.

Loss and damage was the turning point of COP27, with significant political shifts from COP26 as a result of diplomatic efforts led by small island developing states and the Group of 77+China. Building on years of work by developing countries and civil society to continue to raise the importance of providing finance to address loss and damage, governments at COP27 finally agreed to establish a Loss and Damage Fund (LDF). The decision was an important initial step in bringing justice to billions of people, particularly in the global South, who are enduring extreme droughts, tropical cyclones, floods, and sea level rise. In reality, the LDF is merely a remedy to the symptoms of the climate crisis. Addressing its root cause entails the global North taking the lead in phasing out all fossil fuels.

Yet, this is a step developed countries were not willing to take. In the negotiations on the mitigation work programme (MWP), developing countries resisted numerous attempts of developed countries to shift the burden of cutting emissions to the former. Developed countries proposed “special responsibilities” for

...
“major emitters,” such as India and China, to scale up their mitigation efforts. This would have diluted the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) that oblige historic polluters like the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and the European Union (EU) states to take the lead in reducing emissions. In the end, the MWP text followed the US’ suggestion to not prescribe reduction targets due to the “nationally determined” nature of countries’ climate action. The MWP negotiations are scheduled to be concluded by 2026.

Negotiations on the global carbon market rules under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement (PA) was another major sticking point at Sharm el-Sheikh. One area of serious concern was that the rules under Article 6.2 would give countries a free pass to shroud their emission trades in secrecy by designating any type of information, like bilateral agreements and carbon credit trades, as confidential. Article 6.4 proved equally disappointing, with the creation of a new international carbon market that will allow the purchasing of credits from removal activities, known as “Article 6.4 emissions reductions” (A6.4 ERs). This faced pushback from civil society groups, as the lack of safeguards and criteria to consider impacts, including human rights, meant the market risked opening the door to corporate greenwashing. It also had no means of preventing double-counting of emissions reductions, thus allowing countries to avoid more ambitious emission cuts.

The lack of ambition manifested itself even more so on matters related to adaptation. Developing countries specifically called out their developed counterparts for failing to fulfil their COP26 pledges for the Adaptation Fund. Ahead of COP27, a report from the UN Environment Programme revealed that the adaptation fund going to developing countries was five to 10 times lower than the scale of need. Developed countries and multilateral development banks pointed at mobilising private investments for adaptation to address the finance gap even as developing countries warned of risks associated with private financing, such as increasing debt burdens. The final text on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) failed to live up to the expectation of developing countries to come up with a roadmap for doubling the adaptation funds. Instead, it merely called on the Standing Committee on Finance to prepare a report on the matter.

Like in many other COPs, much of what happened in Sharm el-Sheikh was merely window dressing, with several of the developed countries trying to dilute climate targets and renegotiate their financial pledges. When parties wrestled to shape one of the most important climate finance goals—the New Collective Quantified Goal—the US and other developed countries were categorically

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1 Double counting happens when a country selling a carbon credit claims the emissions reduction for itself, while at the same time, the country buying the credit also claims the same emissions reduction. Weak rules on carbon trading could potentially allow double counting of emissions and threaten the integrity of international climate cooperation.
unwilling to commit to higher figures. They argued for expanding the climate finance contributor base by including “high-income” countries and mobilising private sector finance which, according to developing countries, were previously delivered as loans.

The Egyptian presidency particularly envisioned improving the quantity and quality of climate finance flows towards food systems by 2030 and "maintain[ing] a 1.5°C pathway whilst supporting food and economic security." The United Arab Emirates’ (UAE) and the US’ Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C) was the closely watched initiative related to agriculture. AIM4C allegedly intends to increase funding and pour in USD8 billion for the development of climate-smart agriculture and food systems between 2021 and 2025. Civil society groups were quick to point out its bias towards market-oriented agricultural systems that would negatively impact human rights, land and water rights, and food sovereignty, and bolster the already extensive corporate control of food systems.

Speaking of corporate control, COP27 was attended by more than 600 lobbyists from the oil and gas industries—more than any country delegation, with the exception of the UAE which brought over 1000 delegates. Members of civil society and media, particularly those from the global South, faced challenges of rising logistical and accommodation costs in Sharm el-Sheikh. While corporate lobbyists freely roamed to derail meaningful climate action, the local civil society organisations were suppressed from conducting independent actions.

Amid constraints imposed by the host government for peaceful organising and assembly, international civil society and peoples’ movements made history on the first Saturday of the COP—the traditional protest day during the annual climate talks—by conducting a march inside the delegates-only area of the conference (the "blue zone"). Amid the threat of being debadged and kicked out of the conference, cross-constituency actions brought together civil society in demanding drastic emission cuts, more finance for adaptation, reparations for loss and damage, and human rights. Chants of "No climate justice without human rights!" rang out as activists marched to denounce the ceaseless attacks on civil movements for exercising their basic rights.

Frontline communities, civil society, and people’s movements will have their hands full holding governments to account for their promises. This includes ensuring that there will be no backsliding on key principles of international climate cooperation, especially those enshrined in the Convention. Getting the LDF established at COP27 is a historic win for
developing countries, but greater vigilance is needed to ensure that it delivers justice to millions of people facing increasing climate extremes. The fund is, for instance, part of a ‘mosaic’ of loss and damage funding arrangements that include loans and other debt-creating instruments. The question of who will be eligible to access the LDF also remains to be worked out.

The climate crisis demands breaking free from business-as-usual. But given that COP28 will be hosted by one of the largest petrostates (the UAE) and presided over by a fossil fuel executive (Sultan Al Jaber), the task of steering the decision-making processes toward the path of climate justice will be an uphill battle. Civil society anticipates that the repressive political conditions that undercut peoples’ participation at COP27 will continue at COP28. Notwithstanding these hurdles, the people's fight for system change and climate justice will continue, inside and outside the walls of the COP.
“Like in many other COPs, much of what happened in Sharm el-Sheikh was merely window dressing, with several of the developed countries trying to dilute climate targets and renegotiate their financial pledges.”
Side Event:
Putting people and real solutions at the heart of climate action
The People's Struggle for Climate and Social Justice Amid Multiple Systemic Crises

(Delivered by IBON International Executive Director, Jennifer del Rosario-Malonzo, as a keynote address to the Civil Society Caucus for Climate Justice held in Rabat, Morocco on 19-20 November 2022. The Caucus was co-organised with the Arab NGO Network for Development, Espace Associatif, and Moroccan Coalition for Climate Justice.)

Greetings of solidarity!

Throughout the year, poor and marginalised communities in the global South have borne the worst of climate change and its impacts. In Pakistan, severe floods due to intense monsoon rains have displaced at least 33 million people and killed thousands. It destroyed 4 million acres of land, and caused damages worth USD 30-35 billion. The Middle East and North Africa region is warming twice as fast as the global average, increasing the risks of food and water insecurity. The intersecting impacts of climate change and conflict are driving people to migrate in other areas within the region where they are forced to take on low-wage and insecure jobs, or else in other continents where they face the violent discrimination engendered by racist border policies. In October, tropical storm Nalgae hit the Philippines, killing hundreds of people and displacing millions. Farmers, who have been struggling with the steep costs of fuel and farm inputs and the damaging impacts of neoliberal policies to the local agricultural industry, have suffered losses estimated at USD 52 million.
Southern peoples face climate impacts amid multiple systemic crises. Decades of neoliberal policies that have slashed wages, reversed workers’ rights, gutted health, education, and other social services, and destroyed local industries and agriculture have driven millions, especially women and girls, into poor and precarious living conditions. Yet to recover from the pandemic and its impacts, people are struggling with soaring food and energy prices driven by the conflicting interests of global powers involved in the war in Ukraine. Meanwhile, the profits of the seven biggest fossil fuel companies, including Shell, ExxonMobil, and Chevron, have surged to USD 173 billion.

The US and other global powers continue to stoke war and conflict to pursue their economic and geopolitical interests. Tens of thousands of people have been killed and millions have been displaced in the conflict in Ukraine dominated by the US backed-NATO and Russian powers. Since 2001, the US War on Terror waged in MENA and the rest of the global South has killed over 900,000 people and displaced 38 million in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia and the Philippines. Wars significantly contribute to carbon emissions, and aggravate the climate crisis with the use of weapons that destroy land, water bodies, and ecosystems. The US military is known as the world’s largest institutional consumer of petroleum and the largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gases. It produced around 1.2 billion tonnes of carbon emissions between 2001 and 2017, with 400 million of those tonnes directly accountable to the post-9/11 wars.

Peasant and Indigenous Peoples’ communities are also militarised and displaced to facilitate corporate resource plunder and exploitation. According to the latest report by Global Witness, since 2012, over 1,733 land and environmental defenders, majority of whom are Indigenous Peoples, have been killed for defying corporations and defending their rights to land and self-determination.

In COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, we witnessed rich, polluting countries shirk their historical responsibility to address the climate crisis. They pushed back on urgent issues such as climate finance for the adaptation and mitigation needs of vulnerable communities, and additional finance for loss and damage; while promoting false solutions that greenwash corporate plunder and exploitation, and further ecological destruction and the climate crisis. The participation of Southern people’s organisations and civil society have been hampered by limited resources and capacities and a global trend of closing civic spaces.
We co-organised the CSO Caucus for Climate Justice with the Arab NGO Network for Development, Espace Associatif, and the Moroccan Coalition for Climate Justice to provide space for people’s organisations and civil society, especially those who were unable to participate in the COP27 in Egypt, where we could tackle the interlinked climate and socioeconomic crises that we face. We hope to surface grassroots analyses of the climate crisis, and its impacts and consequences to human rights and development in the global South. We hope to conduct independent civil society actions, and raise people’s urgent demands: for equitable fossil fuel phaseout, grants-based climate finance for the adaptation and mitigation needs of vulnerable communities especially in the global South, additional finance for loss and damage, and upholding and protecting the rights of land and environmental defenders. The Caucus also aims to develop initial strategies for conducting coordinated action and mobilisation of civil society for COP28 in Dubai, UAE next year.

The Civil Society Caucus for Climate Justice situates itself within the broader effort of the global climate justice movement to build enabling spaces for alternative articulation of common messages and action to challenge the UN climate negotiations. We hope to contribute to social movements by amplifying their demands and calls for system change, which is the basis for climate and social justice.

Thank you! Long live international solidarity!

“In COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, we witnessed rich, polluting countries shirk their historical responsibility to address the climate crisis.”
CSO Caucus issue key demands, amplify calls for system change towards climate and social justice

Following the COP27 climate negotiations in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, civil society organisations convened from 19 to 20 November 2022 in Rabat, Morocco to articulate Southern peoples’ demands for climate justice, and to hold governments and institutions accountable for their failure to address the climate crisis. The Civil Society Caucus for Climate Justice was co-organised by IBON International with the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Espace Associatif, and Coalition Marocaine pour la Justice Climatique (CMJC).

The CSO Caucus held plenary sessions, covering the socio-economic situation and climate priorities in the West Asia and North Africa region, the outcomes and pledges made at COP27, and various thematic and sectoral issues in advancing climate justice through system change.

The colonial roots of the climate crisis in the global South

Firas Jaber, co-founder and researcher at the Social and Economic Policies Monitor (Al Marsad) – Palestine, spoke about the regional situation and the continuing struggle to end colonialist exploitation and resource plunder. While the economies of the Arab world have heavily relied on fuel and gas exports, only multinational corporations have stood to benefit from these industries. Poverty and unemployment still ravage many of the countries in the region.

Mounir Hassine, a human rights and environmental activist from the Tunisian Forum for Social and Economic Rights (FTDES), talked about the impact of climate change on social justice in Tunisia. Pressing problems such as sea level rise inundating the Tunisian coasts, forest fires, and water scarcity are compounded by an unsustainable, export-led development model that heavily depend on natural resource use. Hassine emphasised the need “to rethink the patterns of production and consumption that have emerged from the current development model and the neoliberal ideas that only take into account the laws of the market, but not environmental justice and sustainability.”

Mohamed Said Saadi, a Moroccan economist and the former Secretary of State for Social Protection, Family and Children, dealt with the concept of a just transition from a Southern perspective. Saadi noted that the dominant notions of ecological transition has a tendency to reinforce existing socio-economic and sectoral inequalities. This is especially true in the global South, where the importance of extractive industries has been inherited from the era of direct colonialism. He also criticised the ideas of “green growth” and “green capitalism”, the objectives of which are not to fight climate change, but to ensure future growth and protect
investors. The capitalist development model based on private ownership of the means of production, the exploitation and commodification of labour and nature, and the infinite growth of profits, Saadi argued, is incompatible with the preservation of planetary ecosystems and social justice.

Abdelhadi Bennis, President of Club Environnement, Association Ribat Al Fath pour le Développement Durable, focused on issues of food sovereignty and the development of agriculture in Morocco since independence, from the state's commitment to food self-sufficiency to the onset of the neoliberal structural adjustment programmes and Morocco's entry into the WTO.

Gershom Kabaso, a human rights activist from the Zambia Social Forum, talked about the challenges facing land and environmental defenders in the global South. Killings, human rights violations, evictions, inequitable land tenure systems, and deforestation, Kabaso explained, are the legacy of historic racial discrimination and violence.

While the economies of the Arab world have heavily relied on fuel and gas exports, only multinational corporations have stood to benefit from these industries. Poverty and unemployment still ravage many of the countries in the region.

**Southern perspectives on COP27**

IBON International’s climate justice programme manager Ivan Enrile reported back from the UN climate talks in Egypt. At COP27, rich nations tried to shirk from being held accountable for their historical responsibility for the climate crisis and demanded the same level of commitment from developing countries in terms of climate action, according to Enrile. This ignores the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. “Developed countries like the US, the EU, Switzerland, and Norway are starting to talk more and more about shared responsibilities... The history of who needs to pay for climate debt is being erased in this narrative,” Enrile added.

Enrile also highlighted the need for new and additional funding for addressing loss and damage (L&D) due to weather extremes and slow onset events. While a L&D funding facility was established at COP27, “[t]he Group of 77 (G77) and China also emphasised the need to recognise in the discussions on L&D finance the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities, equity, and historical responsibility.”

Sara Benyakhlef, an expert in renewable energy, discussed the energy transition in Morocco and the outcomes of COP27. Benyakhlef highlighted that meeting the 2050 targets will depend on sufficient action by 2030. This, she said, will involve a radical shift in policy direction and well-targeted policy packages.
“Developed countries like the US, the EU, Switzerland, and Norway are starting to talk more and more about shared responsibilities. The history of who needs to pay for climate debt is being erased in this narrative.”

The roles of the IMF, World Bank, and the WTO on the climate crisis

Elaine Zuckerman, the founder of Gender Action, an advocacy group focused on holding international financial institutions (IFIs) accountable for their harmful gender and climate impacts, spoke against false climate solutions being promoted by IFIs like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG). Zuckerman criticised what she saw as IFIs’ “doublespeak” of adopting green terminology but continuing to support projects and their private corporate beneficiaries that bring harm to the people and the environment. “False climate solutions such as corporate [net-zero] pledges allow for continued rising GHG emissions, putting the burden of carbon sequestration onto land and tree plantations in the global South. Governments and corporations that have pledged to achieve net zero do so by a distant date, in 2050 when it is too late. We must remember questions of fairness and ethics like whose land and forests are they using to sequester carbon, whose emissions, and whose responsibility,” Zuckerman said.

On the other hand, Ranja Sengupta, a researcher for the Third World Network, focused on elements of neoliberal trade and investment agreements which hamper efforts at sustainability and climate action. These include control of our food systems by agrochemical multinational corporations (MNCs), protection of intellectual property monopolies impacting farmers’ right to seeds, and investor protection provisions which allow foreign companies to sue governments for environmental conservation and climate action. Sengupta criticised the push for sustainability in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and in various free trade agreements as “doublespeak” in which the environment agenda is being used as a tool for further extraction.

Advancing climate justice through system change

The CSO Caucus called out the rich polluter countries and their corporations on their attempts to evade responsibility, and denounced the “greenwashing” of corporate plunder by the IMF, the World Bank Group, and the WTO.

Zidi Omar, a civil society activist from CMJC, zeroed in on rising socio-economic inequality and climate change. Omar pointed to three critical measures to narrow this gap: (1) increased social spending on public services; (2) progressive taxation; and (3) raising wages for ordinary workers and strengthening labour rights, especially for women. He emphasised that, “Climate justice means breaking with the status quo that protects global political elites, multinational corporations and
undemocratic regimes. Its aim is to bring about a social and ecological transformation and adaptation process that enables a better life for humanity and the living on the planet.”

The CSO Caucus came up with a unity statement incorporating learnings from the event, calling out the rich polluter countries and their corporations on their attempts to evade responsibility, and denouncing the “greenwashing” of corporate plunder by the IMF, the World Bank Group, and the WTO. The Caucus also stood in solidarity with Egyptian prisoners of conscience and insisted on the central role of workers, farmers, Indigenous Peoples, women and youth, LGBTQI, persons with disability, and other marginalised communities in climate policymaking and governance.

The unity statement concluded with the call for a shift towards a system that upholds people’s rights and development as the basis for climate and social justice.
EL ACUERDO DE ESCAZU SERÁ UNA HERRAMIENTA PARA EL AVANCE DE LOS DERECHOS EN ASUNTOS AMBIENTALES

- Accesibilidad de la información ambiental
- Facilidad para las personas o grupos en situación de vulnerabilidad
- Mecanismos de revisión independientes.

LEAVE OUR OPEN SPACE
SAVE OUR ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE JUSTICE NOW!

#RiseForClimateJustice
#WeAreNotYetDefeated
#EndClimateImperialism

SERUNI-ILPS Indonesia
Necesitamos apropiarnos del Acuerdo Regional de Estero para evitar más contaminación del agua, tener más fuentes de ríos y de esta forma evitar el deterioro de las tierras cultivables, sobre todo en las Regiones de Occidente y Región Autónoma Sur del Caribe de Nicaragua.

Recordemos que la cantidad y calidad del agua, depende de las acciones que realicen el hombre en su medio ambiente.

**CON EL ACUERDO DE ESERRÍ - PROTEGEMOS LA VIDA Y LA NATURALEZA**

- Garantizaremos a todas las personas y en especial a las generaciones futuras, el derecho a vivir en un medio ambiente sano y a contribuir a su desarrollo sostenible.
- Los Defensores Ambientales tienen mayor seguridad para alzar su voz y que sean respetados sus derechos.
Declaration of the civil society for climate justice
Rabat, Morocco, November 19–20, 2022

The present declaration gathers the 10 axes of reflection and recommendations from the meeting. I/We, the participants of the civil society meeting for climate justice, held in Rabat, Morocco, on November 19 and 20, 2022, acted as development actors to achieve three main objectives:

I. Asserting our right and sovereignty to influence public discourse on climate issues;

II. Demand that international and local governments and institutions admit that they haven't done enough to solve the climate crisis and that they take responsibility for it

III. To make known the demands and the solutions proposed by the populations in this matter.

To this end, we recommend strengthening observation, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms.

I. Reflection on these objectives has led us to express our indignation at the attempts of rich, polluting countries to shirk their historical responsibility for the climate crisis. In the same sense, the analysis of the debates held during the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, led us to call for the institutionalization and effective implementation of the "loss and damage" heading for the benefit of the communities in the South, in the Arab region, and particularly in Morocco, due to the increase in extreme weather phenomena and slow-moving events.
II. These rich countries have tried to evade their responsibility to fight against the rise in global temperatures by refusing two decisions: i) Effective and rapid reduction of carbon emissions: In this context, we support the maintenance of the global warming objective at a level below 1.5 °C, and we ask the different parties to revise upward their NDCs to fight against climate change. ii) Financing the adaptation and mitigation needs of developing countries and frontline communities: In this context, we call on rich countries, especially those of the G20, which account for about 80% of GHG emissions, to significantly increase funding for countries that are victims of their behavior.

III. We call on the rich, developed countries to honor their commitment made in 2015 in Paris, where it was agreed that between 2020 and 2025, 100 billion US dollars would be given each year by these countries to poor countries to help them adapt to climate change and face its most violent manifestations (floods, fires, storms, hurricanes, etc.).

IV. We express our support for the developing countries and frontline communities that have opposed the agenda of the developed countries and have insisted on the respect of the principles of common but differentiated equity and responsibility and respective capacities; these principles should guide the mechanisms of the climate negotiations. We also support their proposal to establish a fund managed by the United Nations System to deal with loss and damage.

This is a historic decision that we hope will address the needs of the poor and vulnerable communities hardest hit by the climate crisis and its socio-economic impacts. Within this same framework of financing, we call on rich countries to meet their climate finance commitments in the form of grants, as well as to provide new and additional financing to meet the adaptation and mitigation needs of developing countries and frontline communities.

V. We resist and call for resistance against the domination of corporations and rich, polluting countries over the UN climate negotiations. We are alarmed by the presence of fossil fuel lobbyists, who are more active than the delegation of poor countries and frontline communities. We oppose the influence of fossil fuel companies. and Companies that take advantage of the climate crisis to make huge profits. In this regard, we support the calls of social movements and civil society organizations to avoid their presence in the negotiations.

VI. We oppose the false solutions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, and the World Trade Organization (WTO),
which whitewash the plundering of natural resources and environmental degradation by certain corporations. The World Bank's financing of fossil fuel projects, despite its rhetoric of "green, resilient, and inclusive development," shows that it continues to defend the interests of these companies. Since the 2015 Paris Agreement, it has provided an estimated $15 billion in financing directly to fossil fuel projects. We denounce these institutions for promoting the exploitation of people and resources in the Global South through neoliberal policies of privatization, liberalization, and deregulation. We support calls for debt cancellation for developing countries to free up resources for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

VII. We stand in solidarity with the civil society that defends prisoners of conscience, human rights, and environmental defenders. We join the calls for an end to attacks on activists and civil society. We join calls for an end to attacks on land and environmental defenders. Global Witness reported that since 2012, more than 1,733 land and environment defenders, the majority of whom are indigenous peoples, have been killed for challenging corporations and defending their rights to land and self-determination.

We demand the mainstreaming and institutionalization of gender equality in climate change policies. Women must have access to financial resources, decision-making positions, and negotiations for inclusive climate justice. IX. We affirm that several social strata must have a central role in climate policy making and governance. These include workers, farmers, local populations, youth, people with disabilities, migrants, and other marginalized communities. They have contributed the least to the crisis but are experiencing the worst impacts.

We support the calls of populations and social movements to change any system that is detrimental to climate and social justice. A change that tends to converge efforts against climate change and efforts for development, as well as a change in mode of production and consumption, to respond to the climate crisis and biodiversity bankruptcy, to end various social and gender inequalities, and to establish equity between the planet's North and South. We must work to move from economies based on the plundering and exploitation of people and the planet to development based on human rights and centered on people, regardless of their race, color, nationality, gender, or religion, and with special attention to their precarious situation and violations of their rights.

Finally, and globally, the participants note the evolution of certain environmental policy commitments in Morocco. They wonder about the weakness or even the absence of the same enthusiasm and involvement recorded during the COP22 meeting held in Marrakech. They express their concern about the non-
participatory and non-inclusive nature of civil society and the different components of society in the development of public policies related to climate and environmental issues. They are concerned about the lack of a fair and equitable position regarding the abusive pumping of water resources in Morocco for the benefit of large-scale operations. commit to working closely with social movements and civil society around the world and will build on the lessons learned from our meeting in Rabat to broaden and strengthen our advocacy and campaigning for climate justice at COP28 in Dubai and beyond.
“No amount of incarceration, no amount of threats can stop me from doing my advocacy work”

ZARA ALVAREZ
(March 25, 1981 – August 17, 2020)
“In Kenya, there is no other community that has a track record of protecting the environment the way the Ogiek have done for centuries.”
“Free Papuan political prisoners! Give the right to self-determination as a democratic solution for the people of West Papua!”
“Let’s save life and the planet by rallying behind the Escazu Agreement which guarantees the security of environmental defenders in Latin America and the Caribbean. This will also hold to account perpetrators of human rights violations.”
From COP27 outcomes to priorities and challenges for civil society

Among the outcomes, what proved to be the litmus test for COP27’s success was the establishment of a fund addressing loss and damage from extreme weather events and slow-onset events (L&D), said Meena Raman, senior researcher at Third World Network. Pakistan, she said, served as the “moral voice” for the COP27 talks on L&D. The country made global headlines in 2022 due to the severe floods which submerged a third of its land area and affected 33 million people. This is especially appalling considering that Pakistan only contributed 0.6% in annual share of global CO₂ emissions. Despite the unwillingness from developed countries to even talk about adaptation and L&D finance, pressure from civil society from the global South and progressive groups in the North had been crucial to the successful outcome on L&D.

The second important outcome was the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage, a technical facility to assist developing countries on capacity building and technical assistance on L&D. At COP27, it was agreed to have an Advisory Board under the Conference of Parties, as well as an independent secretariat. However, Raman notes that the money for it to function had been “kicked down the road.”

The third issue is that of climate finance. Developed countries, said Raman, were very reluctant to have any sort of progress on finance. That institutions were set up is one thing, but it is another to actually follow up on the delivery of USD100 billion by 2020 that rich countries promised at COP15 in Copenhagen.

Another issue kicked down on the road to COP28 was the Global Goal on Adaptation. Policy fights over adaptation, according to Raman, are centred on a failure to recognise equity between the global North and South. Rich countries refuse to recognise their historical responsibility despite clear, official pronouncements on the need to do so. The same can be said on mitigation: developing countries fought back to uphold Common but Differentiated Responsibilities when the North initially wanted to change the phrasing to that of Common and Shared Responsibility.

Lastly a new Work Programme was launched on the Just Transition pathway to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. For developing countries, enabling a just transition is important because many Southern economies still depend on fossil fuels. Raman stressed the need for a just transition that is fair, one that does not burden the poor or displace peoples’ livelihoods.
Bayu Herinata, Director of WALHI Central Kalimantan, mostly talked about adaptation and L&D, highlighting the importance of developed countries’ commitment in financing L&D. L&D, he said, must be prioritised for coastal communities, Indigenous Peoples, and other vulnerable groups. Much of this will be decided in COP28: which countries will contribute and which countries will receive priority financing.

On youth and civil society engagement at COP27, Chito Arceo of the Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines (YACAP) discussed the political climate in this year’s host country, Egypt, where activism is being repressed and even criminalised by the state. He mentioned the inaccessibility of what was supposed to be the “African COP” especially to African activists who were not able to participate. Many civil society voices, Arceo said, were effectively sidelined in favour of those already in power. The Indigenous sector was not able to gain much coverage and it was always the same people talking. This excludes a lot of things that should be talked about when it comes to the climate crisis, Arceo said. He emphasised the imperative to push for wider civic spaces, for greater international solidarity for political prisoners, and for voices of the most affected peoples and areas (MAPA) to be amplified and their campaigns highlighted.

Civil society and people’s movements all over the world have a critical role in ensuring global climate policy aligns with the goal of a just and equitable transition. Such a vision inevitably must take into account the developmental needs of the South and the historical responsibility of the North and their corporations for the climate crisis. It should pay special attention to the rights of small producers, labour, women, Indigenous Peoples, and other communities instead of overly relying on technological fixes which do not address the systemic culpabilities that produced the crisis in the first place. Participatory and economic democracy founded on local self-determination underscore the need for people-powered climate action.
A win for frontline peoples and communities, but the struggle continues

IBON International statement on COP27 decision to establish a loss and damage fund

Sharm El-Sheikh, November 20 -- Today, governments convening at COP27 agreed to establish a Loss and Damage Fund. This is an important initial step at bringing justice to billions of peoples, particularly in the global South, enduring extreme droughts, supertyphoons, floods, and sea level rise. This win is the result of the persistent struggle of civil society and peoples' movements to hold developed countries to account for a crisis wealthiest economies have historically created.

The fight for Loss and Damage Fund – three decades in the making – has not been easy. At COP27, big polluters such as the United States and the European Union from the onset sought to block the creation of the fund, and, to protect their interests, attempted to divide the unity of developing countries with watered-down proposals.

While we at IBON International celebrate this important win, we are also mindful that the COP27 has failed to make progress on a critical, interlinked agenda that would have made a loss and damage fund truly meaningful for frontline peoples and communities.

The Loss and Damage Fund is a remedy to the symptoms of the climate crisis. To address the root cause, global North countries need to take the lead in phasing out all fossil fuels – including oil and fossil gas – without
resorting to false solutions. Global North countries must also honour their outstanding climate finance commitments to provide global South the finance, technology, and capacity to adapt to climate change and leapfrog to people-centred, gender-just, sustainable development models. The world is already on its way to a 2.8 degrees Celsius temperature overshoot. The economic and non-economic costs of losses and damages due to climate change will only become more burdensome as long as global North countries delay action on their historical and legal responsibility.

Likewise, the COP27 was a missed opportunity to include loss and damage as a third pillar of the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance. Establishing such a pillar would have enshrined a post-2025 loss and damage finance goal in both the UN Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. Such a step would have aligned loss and damage finance commitments with the key principles of the Convention on equity, historical responsibility, and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities, as well as the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global average temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Needless to say, we have a huge battle ahead of us. The Loss and Damage Fund needs to be operationalised, with developed countries contributing their fair share of new, additional, and adequate finance to the fund. We will continue to push for a loss and damage fund accessible to all developing countries that are vulnerable to loss and damage due to climate change. The fund must be grants-based, with no colonial conditionalities attached. Together with the broader peoples’ movements and frontline communities, we commit to continue the struggle, inside and outside of the COP, for climate justice and system change.

“We have a huge battle ahead of us. The Loss and Damage Fund needs to be operationalised, with developed countries contributing their fair share of new, additional, and adequate finance to the fund.”
The South needs new loss and damage funds, not rebadged climate finance, aid

IBON International on New Zealand, Austria, and Ireland’s loss and damage finance pledge

Sharm El-Sheikh, November 10 – On November 9, New Zealand announced a USD 12 million pledge to deal with the impact of loss and damage caused by climate change. The country has joined Ireland and Austria which have all committed between USD 5 to USD 50 million to help developing countries recover from extreme weather events and address the impacts from slow onset climatic processes.

These pledges underscore that the fight for loss and damage finance is gaining political momentum and that developed country governments can no longer sweep their accountability under the rug. A cursory glance at these pledges, however, reveals that these are not new and additional but merely rebranded from developed countries’ existing climate finance commitments.

New Zealand’s USD 12 million loss and damage pledge comes from a portion of the USD 1.3 billion in climate finance that the government already announced in Glasgow in 2021. Similarly, Ireland’s USD 10 million pledge for loss and damage will be from the country’s existing support for climate adaptation and mitigation in developing countries. The amount will also be going towards the “Global Shield” initiative which will see Ireland subsidising Northern-owned insurance corporations and the frontline communities paying insurance premiums.

Austria’s loss and damage pledge also requires closer scrutiny. A recent civil society study shows that only around half of the Austrian government’s total climate finance for 2011 to 2018 was additional to the amount it contributed
in 2009, the year of the COP15 climate finance commitment. Of the total, 33% are non-concessional money.

Dividing up already inadequate levels of support for climate action means further delaying the adaptive capacity of climate-vulnerable communities and sectors. Rebadging official aid as loss and damage finance will further fragment and shrink the already paltry resources going towards economic development and welfare of developing countries.

Recent estimates show that the loss and damage in developing countries alone will cost between USD 290 billion and 580 billion annually by 2030. Given the scale and scope of needs, new and additional climate finance for loss and damage is critical and developed countries must contribute their fair share.

Developed countries must demonstrate their commitment by supporting the call for a dedicated loss and damage finance facility at COP27. This will help ensure sustained, predictable, grants-based assistance to those most affected by the overlapping climate, economic, and ecological crises.

The delivery of new and additional loss and damage finance could make or break COP27. Failure to act is not only a grave injustice. It will rob frontline communities of their most basic human rights, including the right to development, life with dignity, and a safe and healthy environment for themselves and future generations.

“Failure to act is not only a grave injustice. It will rob frontline communities of their most basic human rights, including the right to development, life with dignity, and a safe and healthy environment for themselves and future generations.”