

# The Interfaith Talanoa Dialogue call to COP 27

Call submitted by the Interfaith Liaison Committee to UNFCCC

## **Introduction**

We, people of faiths, gathered for an Interfaith Talanoa Dialogue on 6 November in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. For some years now the faith traditions have started COP meetings with an interfaith dialogue. This is to strengthen our shared faith-based efforts and to be constructive partners at COP 27

The Interfaith Talanoa Dialogue illustrated the great unity that exists between different faiths and traditions in dialogue on the ecological crisis. We have a deep concern about the severe state our Mother Earth is in.

We see that scientific information and statements from political leaders have not succeeded in diverting us from a very dangerous trajectory. Life on earth, as we know it, is in danger.

To act against short-termism and economic growth models that do not include the health of the ecosystems we need new narratives. We need to raise the moral obligation to act. The most vulnerable must be protected and those who gained most from human-made greenhouse gas emissions must act responsibly.

Our different faiths have narratives that lead us to protect and to love our neighbour. We need faith communities to underpin the great transition we must undertake: A just transition for climate justice.

Our dialogues with over 100 people resulted in this call on different themes that must be included in the climate negotiations.

## **Human Rights & Climate change & Climate Induced Migration:**

Human rights are pivotal to climate change. Climate Action must not put human rights in danger. A ruined climate is violating human rights to life and the ecosystems that human life depends on.

## **We call on all on COP 27 to**

- Protect environmental human rights defenders.
- Invite the UN special rapporteur on human rights and climate change to be a bridge to centre climate justice and human rights in climate action.

- Acknowledge the role of faith-based communities in shifting consciousness - an inner transformation for the true respect of dignity and human rights, in the context of climate change.
- Those not heard must be included, which means that any climate actions should be based on human rights.
- Build hope for the affected communities.

## **Loss and Damage**

Loss and damage mechanisms must be developed as more and more are severely hit by climate related disasters.

There are even intangible aspects as a result of climate change which are overlooked. Loss and damage cannot be quantified. It needs in-depth reflection. There is a neglect of intergenerational trauma in the discussions around loss and damage.

There is a great need to increase the level of ambition in financing loss and damage and acknowledge that monetizing is not enough.

Acknowledge the role of women and gender in addressing loss and damage.

Acknowledge the role of faith leaders. We need concrete action among all actors in solidarity.

## **We call on COP 27 to**

- Continue to raise awareness and understanding of loss and damage.
- Establish a mechanism to address loss and damage and ensure a process to secure, adequate, accessible, and built on additional financing
- Apply democratic pressure in support of the claims of affected communities.
- Address both the economic and non-economic losses and damages.

## **Young People Participation & Climate Negotiations**

Youth are the ones who must live with the growing impacts of climate change. The consequences of the decisions made by today's leaders will last for a long time. Even if decision makers say that they are listening to young people's demands and express praise for young people's efforts and leadership on climate action, there is still no action being taken seriously to exert real engagement with youth in society. This is happening despite young people's high-level of engagement and visibility in the UNFCCC and in society. In the international climate arena young people are typically side-lined in events and discussions and excluded from the highest level of participation in climate negotiations. This exclusion is not only delaying the creation of creative and effective climate policies, but also having serious repercussions on young people's physical and mental health.

Young people of faith represented in Sharm El Sheikh for COP27, are committed to fostering greater unity and solidarity among the world's young people of faith, to initiating

opportunities for constructive dialogue between Youth from the Global North and the Global South so that we can better learn from each other and understand our needs based on our shared commitment to climate action and pushing for the inclusion of young people at the negotiation table.

### **We call on COP 27 to**

- Uphold the existing UN mandates on youth participation, including Agenda 21 (25.1) which calls for young people to be included in environment and development decision-making.
- Include young people in all decisions that affect our future by demonstrating a commitment to our demand for ‘Nothing for us without us’
- Include intergenerational justice in all discussion and actions for climate justice.
- Recognize young people’s leadership capabilities for the implementation of climate proposals and commit to supporting youth on-ground climate actions with sustainable finance and resources.
- Open up the negotiation process to children and young people and include children and youth in the negotiation process.

### **The Wisdom of Indigenous Peoples**

Indigenous Peoples are pivotal to addressing climate change. Indigenous Peoples are often in the frontline of climate change impacts and are also bearers of wisdom on how to live a more sustainable life.

Climate projects that harm the environment are often opposed by local/indigenous communities. In different ways, indigenous peoples are often affected by so-called ‘green solutions’ like mining for earth metals, building hydropower dams or erecting windmills in sensitive areas where indigenous people live.

### **We call on COP27 to**

- Take into account the wisdom of indigenous culture and their traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation to and mitigation of climate change in the transition to a more sustainable world.
- Respect Indigenous Peoples rights
- Not exploit indigenous lands in the name of green solutions.

### **Gender Inclusive Climate Action**

Women and girls, in all their diversity, are, to a great part, responsible for feeding the family, fetching water and working in the fields. They also have special health needs. Women and girls are especially vulnerable to climate change induced crises and slow - onset effects, including from traumas. This does not get adequate recognition by UNFCCC and other stakeholders in their program and financial schemes.

Many women and girls, in all their diversity, lack knowledge and awareness about their rights and about climate change

Yet, women and girls are at the forefront of strengthening the resilience of communities.

Climate justice depends on equal participation of women and girls.

Gender-equal leadership in climate action needs to be strengthened by better access to information, awareness building and by the empowerment of women and girls. Equal participation of women and girls in all decision-making processes related to climate change is crucial.

Intersectional gender lenses should be used at all climate related projects, programs, schemes – starting from risk analysis through prevention, planning, implementation and evaluation.

We, as faith communities, must work to uplift women and communicate their critical messages, in partnership with government and educational establishments.

### **We call on COP 27 to**

- Act for global recognition of women and girls, in all their diversity, as the most vulnerable who are impacted by the climate crisis.
- Secure that climate funding and resources will reach women and girls at the local level.
- Be critically aware that women and girls in urban and rural settings are impacted differently.
- Prioritize education for women and girls and do it with an intersectional lens.
- UN programmes should always include voices of women and girls at every level of engagement.

### **Finance for Climate Action and Adaptation**

People are not connecting to the climate problem through a historical injustice lens, and this stalls progress on the accountability of the developed countries. We must catalyse systemic change by placing this awareness at the centre.

It is clear that needs are immense and surpass the finance provided, which can also be difficult to access. Developed countries should scale up and deliver their commitments.

### **We call on COP 27 to**

- Meet the target of 100 billion dollars a year for adaptation that should have been done 2 years ago.
- Support locally led adaptation.
- Ensure funding is adequate and available.
- Define the role of national and regional actors in facilitating adaptation.
- Facilitate the role of faith leaders and institutions in contributing to adaptation efforts.
- Improve partnership across all sectors and increase the voice of humanitarian organizations as the equalizers.

### **Just transition - Mitigation**

We are in a crisis and people don't know enough about climate change. The knowledge of climate change often leads to fear, apathy, or indifference. The broader understanding of climate change is still missing among most people.

Developing countries are also in an energy crisis. We want a healthy renewable transition for all.

We need to see an end to the economic growth model and models that do not include the effects on ecosystems.

We are hoping for a society that takes the vulnerable people into account - a compassionate society

We need to see governments acting faster and avoiding being captured by corporate actors.

We need to build this just transition on a bottom-up approach that includes faith communities at local levels. This includes a social dialogue, social protection policies and sustainable jobs. There is a great need for a 'polluter pays' tax that will support sustainability and a just transition. To achieve this, we need a new economic model that includes a compassionate inclusion of the most vulnerable and protects our vulnerable ecosystem at the same time.

### **We call on COP27 to**

- Assist mitigation based on just transition for a 1.5C temperature limit.
- Fulfil the obligation to revise and align the current NDCs with the goals of the Paris Agreement, i.e., by increasing the ambitions that is a credible pathway to limiting global warming to 1.5 °C,
- Prioritize sustainable lifestyles and a compassionate society as a part of the mitigation targets.
- Work for a new, green economic model that includes 'polluter pays' taxes and upholds a global common of natural resources.

## **Ecocide Law**

We see so many threats to ecosystems today. The western anthropocentric view has brought us to a stage where we are not attentive to the ecosystems we are depending on. Therefore, there is a need for an international law that protects ecosystems from Ecocide. Ecocide means *“unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts.”*

## **We call on COP27**

- To encourage all parties of the UNFCCC to act to make ecocide a crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

## **Faith communities building strength and resilience in the face of the climate crisis - a call to all people of faith**

As 84 per cent on the world’s population subscribe to a faith and 94 percent in Africa, we call on the UNFCCC to make sure that the voice of faith based organisations are included in climate negotiations on an ongoing basis.

Faiths are able to address the root causes of problems which go deeper than finance, technology or politics. Faiths provide the much needed focus away from condemnation towards lovingly finding solutions, towards non-violence in our awareness and action towards the Earth.

Faith leaders must therefore recognize the seriousness and provide factual and scientific knowledge about climate change as well as methods to build spiritual capacity for resilience. They must communicate this through the structures of their faith-based organizations to lay people and to faith communities.

We, as people of faith, have to advance our efforts in communicating and cooperating together with all faith communities, all confessions and religions.

By embracing our message of hope, we should move towards climate justice.

We must acknowledge the role of faiths in building spiritual and practical resilience in the face of loss and damage. At the same time, we as people of faith, can practice ecological readings of our scriptures in studies and in education. We also look into traditions in our faiths that support a more sustainable life and try to learn from each other.

## **We call upon the UNFCCC and FBOs together:**

To strengthen trust between Politicians and FBOs to make for fairer representation of communities on the ground and to come to just solutions.

**We call upon the UNFCCC to:**

Include Faith Based Organisations in negotiations so that the voices of local communities and the wisdom of faiths can be taken into account.

**We call upon all people of faith to**

- Include an ecological perspective in practicing their faith, both in reading scriptures and in practicing our traditions.
- Educate our faith communities in ecological science that helps all to better understand the interconnectedness of life.
- Build hope by action on climate justice.
  - Stay critical of 'greenwashing' projects by listening to those most affected.