



Once More, a Plea for Immediate Action “Climate Justice for All”

Statement from the World Council of Churches
To the High-Level Ministerial Segment of the
17th Session of the Conference of the Parties – COP17 to the UNFCCC
7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties – CMP7 to the Kyoto Protocol
Durban, Republic of South Africa
Friday, 9th December 2011

Madam President,
Distinguished Participants,
Dear Sisters and Brothers,

*“Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD
your God is giving you.”
Deuteronomy 16:20*

Since COP1, year after year, the World Council of Churches has spoken on behalf of hundreds of churches, church based organisations, ecumenical movements, and faith based movements throughout the world, that work daily with communities whose lives and livelihoods are severely affected by climate change.

In November 2006 we met here in Africa, in Nairobi, Kenya, on occasion of COP12-MOP2. The World Council of Churches was invited to address the Joint Plenary of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol during the High Level Ministerial Segment.

We shared the Statement of the Faith Communities demanding “**Climate Justice for All**”! And I quote: *“Equitable development for all is possible while managing the ecological integrity of the biosphere. Faith Communities are addressing climate change because it is a spiritual and ethical issue of justice, equity, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. The situation is critical. We must all act now. We pray that you will demonstrate leadership in responding to the cry of the Earth”*.

After five years, we come back to Africa and find that the Faith Communities and the Civil Society are still pleading, requesting, demanding “**Climate Justice for All**”!

Climate change is cruelly hitting African countries, Pacific Island States and South American and Asian peoples, while you still do not listen to our voices. Where is justice?

Where are you, on whom we deposited our confidence and our expectations for a tomorrow in peace without the unjust menace that will not discriminate against peoples and nations?

Once more, we state the imperious need of an ambitious, just, and legally binding agreement. Targets in the long and short term for GHG emission reduction must be agreed in order to achieve an average global temperature increase well below 2 degrees Centigrade.

Once more, we demand a strong leadership role of the Parties involved assuring a second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol, a protocol that must ensure a more principle-based approach, crucial for reaching an effective, equitable and justifiable global climate policy regime.

Durban might be the last opportunity for the international community to be responsible in addressing climate change. To do this, Durban must adopt a package, consisting out of three main elements:

1. A Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol, the only legally binding instrument we have up to now setting clear targets for GHG emissions.
2. A clear mandate to conclude negotiations on a legally binding instrument or instruments by 2015. Under the Long term Cooperative Action, steps must be taken to ensure that a binding legal regime is agreed by all countries, where the UNFCCC principles, especially of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities, future generations, and sustainable development prevail.
3. A set of measures to implement all Cancún agreements, including the Green Climate Fund, in order it can become an effective financing tool for low carbon development, adaptation and an adequate answer to loss and damage in the most vulnerable regions.

This time in Durban, religious communities, especially from Africa, have come together in various ways to express that climate change is also a moral and spiritual crisis. We proclaim together: **“We have faith. Act now for climate justice!”**

The countries that have polluted the most ought to recognise their ecological debt guaranteeing an appropriate financing for adaptation and low carbon development purposes to those countries that polluted the less.

We contemplate a new era of turbulence. To avoid its devastating consequences we urgently need a change of paradigm, as we expressed in our Statement to the plenary during COP13-CMP3 Bali, in 2007. This shift of attitude and actions are needed in order to create a new world. **We believe that another world is possible!**

The time has arrived to accelerate the process of achieving quantifiable goals to restore our common home, planet Earth, rather than merely discuss about future steps to be taken to restore, our common home, planet Earth.

*“But let justice roll down like waters,
and the righteousness like an overflowing stream.”*
Amos 5:24

Thank you very much.

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