



## **THE WORLD EXPECTS COP28 TO AGREE ON CONCRETE CLIMATE ACTION**

Like previous Conferences of the Parties, COP28 has raised expectations around the world that concrete actions will be taken to address the climate crisis, which is having devastating effects notably in developing countries. With the highest global temperatures in 2023 in over 100 000 years and heat records broken in all continents through 2022, the urgency of such actions is clearer than ever.

COP28 will be a new test on the capacity of the multilateral system to respond to one of the major planetary challenges. The conclusion of the first global stocktake at COP28 and the reports and information produced by diverse bodies should serve not only to show the world where we stand but what can effectively be done with regard to adaptation, mitigation, loss and damage, and means of implementation.

The issues at stake at COP28 are complex and need to be dealt with in a context of deep asymmetries in the capacity to address them at the national and regional levels. Of course, there are also different responsibilities. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities must remain as a pillar of any set of actions to be agreed upon. Such actions need to recognize the developmental imperatives of the Global South, including the generation of more energy to support development while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A just energy transition has to promote meaningful development and reduce inequality in a sustainable manner compatible with climate imperatives.

The economic losses associated with climate change, including a higher frequency of heatwaves and droughts, continued to increase. Income losses exacerbate global inequities. Climate change finance is key to address the impact of climate change. An operational definition of climate finance is still needed to facilitate access by developing countries to needed public and private financial resources. The fact that developed countries' financial commitments are still unmet, not only means that developing countries cannot implement the required adaptation and mitigation policies but that climate change will continue to be a global threat. Innovative mechanisms, including a climate finance withholding mechanism,<sup>1</sup> need to be considered for addressing the urgent climate finance needs of developing countries.

Governments should also explore market, hybrid and non-market approaches to accelerate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, as well as cooperative

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.southcentre.int/climate-policy-brief-28-14-november-2022/>.

approaches to improve developing countries' bargaining power, reduce costs and ensure adaptation and innovation capacity in the developing world.<sup>2</sup>

The effects of climate change cannot be considered in silos as currently is the case. A comprehensive policy approach is needed, including its relationship with health, debt, trade and the realization of human rights.

Climate change has major impacts on health. As noted by a recent report,<sup>3</sup> it is damaging the natural and human systems, including water security, sanitation, and food production. Food insecurity puts millions of people at risk of malnutrition and potentially irreversible health effects while changing climatic conditions increase the risk of life-threatening infectious diseases, such as dengue, malaria, vibriosis and the West Nile virus.

Climate change contributes to the growing indebtedness of many developing countries, particularly those countries that suffer severe climate events.

Trade is impacted by climate change and can also influence the environment, but these problems cannot be solved by new trade disciplines that may essentially constrain the participation of developing countries in world trade.

The effects of climate change on people's daily lives threaten the full enjoyment of human rights. While the adoption by the Human Rights Council of two landmark resolutions recognising the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment must be welcomed, a broader dialogue between the UNFCCC and the UN human rights architecture seems necessary to establish a coordinated and coherent response to climate change and its effects on human rights.

In particular, a human rights-based approach should inspire the operationalisation of the loss and damage fund, including fair representation in decision making of vulnerable communities. Important issues to be considered are how the realization of the right to development may be impacted by loss and damage from climate change, and how States and other actors should contribute to prevent, mitigate and remedy the impacts of climate change-related loss and damage on such right and other human rights.

The South Centre will continue to support developing countries in addressing the variety of issues that require a multilateral solution and overcoming the current fragmentation in policy making on interconnected matters.

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<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.southcentre.int/climate-policy-brief-28-14-november-2022/>.

<sup>3</sup> See [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(23\)01859-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(23)01859-7/fulltext).