

Español, Français, Climate, Climate Negotiation, CAFOD, CCFD – Terre Solidaire, Development & Peace, Misereor, Trócaire

## CATHOLIC BISHOPS' STATEMENT IN LIMA ON THE ROAD TO PARIS

December 9, 2014



Working together at the High-level event at the COP20 in Lima, Bishops from all continents called for a fair and legally binding climate agreement to be signed at the COP21 in Paris, 2015. (Document available in EN/ES/FR)

### Introduction – from COP20 to COP21

We Catholic Bishops from all continents have come together in Lima on the occasion of COP20 to join the efforts of world leaders as they work towards signing a just and legally binding climate agreement in Paris in 2015.

Following the evangelical option for the poor, we work closely with the most vulnerable communities and the excluded and as such are closely attuned to how the problem of climate change is affecting them. Our message to political leaders and all people of good will is rooted in the experience and suffering of these poor communities.

Humankind on the Planet Earth is ordained to live in equity, justice and dignity, peace and harmony in the midst of the order of Creation. Humankind is ordered to treat respectfully Creation, which has a value in itself. We Catholic Bishops recognize the atmosphere, rainforests, oceans and agricultural land as common good that require our care.

### **Climate Change and Climate Justice today**

We recognize that much good has happened on Earth through the rightful and responsible intelligence, technology and industry of humankind under God's loving care. And yet in recent decades many grave adversities such as climate change, with its devastating impact on Nature itself, on food security, health and migration, led to a great number of suffering people worldwide.

We express an answer to what is considered God's appeal to take action on the urgent and damaging situation of global climate warming. The main responsibility for this situation lies with the dominant global economic system, which is a human creation. In viewing objectively the destructive effects of a financial and economic order based on the primacy of the market and profit, which has failed to put the human being and the common good at the heart of the economy, one must recognize the systemic failures of this order and the need for a new financial and economic order.

We note with appreciation that, in our times, States, Religions and Groups of Civil Society and individuals at all levels are recognizing more and more the natural as well as the ethical concerns of this matter. We wish to see therefore a deepening of the discourse at the COP20 in Lima, to ensure concrete decisions are taken at COP21 to overcome the climate challenge and to set us on new sustainable pathways.

We recognize that in line with truly democratic principles the poor and the poorer nations, who are many and are more affected by climate change impacts, are also agents in the development of nations and human life on earth. They also give us a voice and a sense of hope in our times as we face crises such as climate change. We hope their gentle, meaningful and active participation will encourage decision makers to develop more mixed systems instead of "one size fits all" modern technological-industrial approaches.

### **We as Bishops call on all parties**

1. to keep in mind not only the technical but particularly the ethical and moral dimensions of climate

change as indicated in Article 3 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

2. to adopt a fair and legally binding global agreement based on the universal human rights applicable to all in Paris in 2015.

3. to keep the global temperature increase below 1.5 degree Celsius, relative to pre-industrial levels, in order to protect frontline communities suffering from the impacts of climate change, such as those in the Pacific Islands and in the coastal regions.

4. to build new models of development and lifestyles that are both climate compatible and bring people out of poverty. Central to this is to put an end to the fossil fuel era, phasing out fossil fuel emissions and phasing in 100% renewables with sustainable energy access for all.

5. to ensure that the 2015 agreement delivers an adaptation approach that adequately responds to the immediate needs of the most vulnerable communities and builds on local alternatives. They should ensure that 50% of public funds go to meeting their adaptation needs.

6. to recognize that adaptation needs are contingent on the success of mitigation measures taken. Those responsible for climate change have responsibilities to assist the most vulnerable in adapting and managing loss and damage and to share the necessary technology and knowhow.

7. to adopt clear roadmaps on how countries will meet predictable and additional finance commitments and establish robust and transparent accounting methodologies.

### **Our commitment**

We Catholic Bishops believe that Creation is life offered, is a gift for one another and that all will have the needed “daily bread”, providing sustainable food security and nutrition.

We Catholic Bishops commit ourselves to developing the sense of ‘gratuitousness’<sup>3</sup> to contribute to a lifestyle which frees us from a desire of appropriation and enables us to be respectful of the dignity of the person and the harmony of creation.

We Bishops want to accompany the political process and seek dialogue to bring the voices of the poor to the table of decision-makers;

We are convinced that everyone has a capacity to contribute to overcome climate change and to choose sustainable lifestyles.

We Bishops call on all Catholics and people of good will to engage on the road to Paris as a starting point for a new life in harmony with Creation respecting planetary boundaries.

### **BISHOP SIGNATORIES TO THIS DECLARATION:**

Monsignor Salvador Piñeiro García-Calderón, Archbishop of Ayacucho, Peru. President of the Bishops' Conference of Peru

Monsignor Pedro Barreto Jimeno, Archbishop of Huancayo, Peru. President of the Justice and Solidarity

Department of the Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM)

Monsignor Sithembele Antón Sipuka, Bishop of Umtata, South Africa. Representative of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM)

Monsignor Theotonius Gomes, Auxiliary Bishop of Dhaka (Emeritus), Bangladesh. Representative of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences (FABC)

Monsignor Marc Stenger, Bishop of Troyes, Representative of the Episcopal Conference of France

Monsignor Zanoni Demettino Castro, Archbishop of Feira de Santana, Brazil. Representative of the Bishops' Conference of Brazil

Monsignor Richard Alarcón Urrutia, Bishop of Tarma, President of Caritas Peru

Monsignor Jaime Rodríguez, Bishop of Huánuco, Perú

Monsignor Alfredo Vizcarra, Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of San Francisco Javier de Jaén, Perú

Written in collaboration with our Catholic agencies CEAS (Peru), CIDSE, Caritas Internationalis, CAFOD (UK), CCFD–Terre Solidaire (France), Cordaid (The Netherlands), Development and Peace (Canada), MISEREOR (Germany), Secours Catholique (France) and Trócaire (Ireland).

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HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTIONS IN THE 2015 CLIMATE AGREEMENT
7 February 2015

We, the undersigned organizations, call for language in the 2015 climate agreement stating that the Parties to the UNFCCC shall, in all climate change-related actions, respect, protect, promote, and fulfil human rights for all.

Climate change is a global injustice to present and future generations, and one of the greatest human rights challenges of our time. We are highly concerned about the grave harm that climate change is already causing, and will continue to cause, to people and communities as well as to the environment on which we all depend. It has a disproportionate impact on the world's poorest and most vulnerable, and not are increasingly exceeding adaptation limits, resulting in significant loss and damage, as documented by the 1st Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This report also highlights that current emission reduction actions are insufficient to limit global warming to the 1.5 degrees needed to avoid the most catastrophic of projected impacts.

A safe climate is critical to the full enjoyment of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water, adequate housing, and self-determination. However, it is well recognized—by the UN Human Rights Council and others—that climate change and certain actions being taken to address climate change interfere with the enjoyment of human rights protected under international law. For this reason, in 2010, the Parties to the UNFCCC agreed that “Parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights.” We regard the recognition of existing obligations as critical for a range of aspects, including with regard to safeguards and accountability for all climate actions, full and effective participation, and support for poorer countries whose capacities to protect their citizens’ human rights are strained by climate change impacts. However, we are concerned that this language has not been further operationalized in the UNFCCC process.

With negotiations for the Paris agreement underway, NOW is the time to fully integrate rights protections in the climate regime.

We welcome the reference to human rights, indigenous peoples rights and gender in the current version of the draft negotiating text annexed to the “Lima call for climate action”, which stresses that “all actions to address climate change and all the processes established under this agreement should ensure a gender-responsive approach, take into account environmental integrity (the protection of the integrity of Mother Earth, and respect human rights, the right to development and the rights of indigenous peoples.”

Yet we urge all Parties to include human rights in the operational provisions of the 2015 agreement. In doing so, we endorse the recommendations of 28 independent experts of the Human Rights Council, set forth in their “Open Letter from Special Procedures mandate-

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