



## THE AFRICAN LEADERS NAIROBI DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND CALL TO ACTION

### PREAMBLE

We, the African Heads of State and Government, gathered for the inaugural Africa Climate Summit (ACS) in Nairobi, Kenya, from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023; in the presence of other global leaders, intergovernmental organizations, Regional Economic Communities, United Nations Agencies, private sector, civil society organizations, indigenous peoples, local communities, farmer organizations, children, youth, women and academia, hereby:

1. *Recall*, the Assembly Decisions (*AU/Dec.723(XXXII)*, *AU/Dec.764 (XXXIII)* and *AU/Dec.855(XXXVI)*) requesting the African Union Commission to organize an African Climate Summit and endorsing the offer by the Republic of Kenya to host the Summit;
2. *Commend* the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSSC) under the Leadership of *H.E. President William Ruto* for providing a unified approach and political leadership on an African vision that simultaneously pursues climate change and development agenda;
3. Commends the Arab Republic of Egypt for the successful COP27 and its historic outcomes, in particular loss and damage, just transition and energy, and calls for the full implementation of all COP27 decisions
4. *Take Note* of the 6th Assessment Report (AR6) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), stating that the world is not on track to keeping within reach the 1.5°C limit agreed in Paris and that global emissions must be cut by 45% in this decade;
5. *Underscore* the IPCC confirmation that Africa is warming faster than the rest of the world and, if unabated, climate change will continue to have adverse impacts on African economies and societies, and hamper growth and wellbeing;

6. *Express concern* that many African countries face disproportionate burdens and risks arising from climate change-related, unpredictable weather events and patterns, including prolonged droughts, devastating floods, wild/forest fires, which cause massive humanitarian crisis with detrimental impacts on economies, health, education, peace and security, among other risks;
7. *Acknowledge* that climate change is the single greatest challenge facing humanity and the single biggest threat to all life on Earth. It demands urgent and concerted action from all nations to lower emissions and reduce the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere;
8. *Recognise* that Africa is not historically responsible for global warming, but bears the brunt of its effect, impacting lives, livelihoods, and economies;
9. *Reaffirm* the principles set out in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement, namely equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities,
10. *Further recognise* that African cities and urban centres are growing rapidly, and by 2050 would be home to over 1.0 billion people. Cognisant of the fact that rapid urbanization, poverty, and inequality limit planning capacities and other urban dynamics which increase people's exposure and vulnerability to hazards and have thus turned cities into disaster hotspots across the continent.
11. *Recall* that only seven years remain to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, and *note with concern* that 600 million people in Africa still lack access to electricity while 970 million lack access to clean cooking;
12. *Emphasise* that Africa possesses both the potential and the ambition to be a vital component of the global solution to climate change. It is home to the world's youngest and fastest-growing workforce, coupled with massive untapped renewable energy potential, abundant natural assets and entrepreneurial spirit, our continent has the fundamentals to pioneer a climate-positive pathway as a thriving, cost-competitive industrial hub with the capacity to support other regions in achieving their net zero ambitions.
13. *Acknowledge* Africa's role as one of the largest carbon sinks through the Congo forest and peatland, as well as, the potential in Africa's savanna grasslands, mangroves, swamps, coral reefs and marine reserves, and note the progress made by African countries in promoting land and ecosystem restoration through various initiatives and programmes,

14. Recognize the critical importance of the ocean in climate action, reversing biodiversity loss and the sustainable development of African and other countries globally, and commitments made on ocean sustainability in multiple fora such as the Second UN Oceans Conference in 2022, the African Union Agenda 2063 and UN Agenda 2030, in COPs 26 and 27 and most recently in the Moroni Declaration for Ocean and Climate Action in Africa
15. Reiterate Africa's readiness to create an enabling environment, enact policies and facilitate investments necessary to unlock resources to not only meet our own climate commitments, but to contribute meaningfully to decarbonisation of the global economy.
16. Concerned that despite Africa having an estimated 40 percent of the world's renewable energy resources, only \$60 billion or two percent of US\$3trillion renewable energy investments in the last decade have come to Africa. Meeting the 300 Giga Watts (GW) target by 2030 at an estimated cost of \$600 billion translates to a tenfold increase in the finance capital flowing into Africa's renewable energy sector over the next seven years. Unlocking Africa's climate positive growth potential on a scale that can contribute meaningfully to decarbonisation of the global economy will require several multiples of the current development and investment finance flows

**Collective action needed.**

17. We call upon the global community to act with urgency in reducing emissions, fulfilling its obligations, keeping past promises, and supporting the continent in addressing climate change, specifically to:
  1. Accelerate all efforts to reduce emissions to align with goals set forth in the Paris Agreement
  2. Honor the commitment to provide \$100 billion in annual climate finance, as promised 14 years ago at the Copenhagen conference.
  3. Uphold commitments to a fair and accelerated process of phasing down coal, and abolishment of all fossil fuel subsidies.
  4. Swiftly operationalize the Loss and Damage facility agreed at COP27;
18. We call for climate-positive investments that catalyse a growth trajectory, anchored in the industries poised to transform our planet and enabling African countries to achieve stable middle-income status by 2050.
19. We urge global leaders to join us in seizing this unprecedented opportunity to accelerate global decarbonization, while pursuing equality and shared prosperity;

20. Urges the operationalization of the Loss & Damage fund as agreed at COP27 and resolve for a measurable Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) with indicators and targets to access progress against negative impacts of climate change

**We commit to:**

21. Developing and implementing policies, regulations and incentives aimed at attracting local, regional and global investment in green growth and inclusive economies;

22. Propelling Africa's economic growth and job creation in a manner that not only limits our own emissions but also aids global decarbonization efforts, by leapfrogging traditional industrial development and fostering green production and supply chains on a global scale;

23. Focusing our economic development plans on climate-positive growth, including expansion of just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, climate-aware and restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity;

24. Strengthen actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation, desertification, as well to restore degraded lands to achieve land degradation neutrality;

25. Strengthening continental collaboration, which is essential to enabling and advancing green growth, including but not limited to regional and continental grid interconnectivity, and further accelerating the operationalization of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement;

26. Advancing green industrialization across the Continent by prioritizing energy-intensive industries to trigger a virtuous cycle of renewable energy deployment and economic activity, with a special emphasis on adding value to Africa's natural endowments;

27. Redoubling our efforts to boost agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices, to enhance food security while minimizing negative environmental impacts;

28. Taking the lead in the development of global standards, metrics, and market mechanisms to accurately value and compensate for the protection of nature, biodiversity, socio-economic co-benefits, and the provision of climate services;

29. Finalising and implementing the draft African Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with the view to realizing the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature;

30. Integrate climate, biodiversity and ocean agendas and instruments at national plans and processes to assure their full potential to support sustainable development is realized and support nature-based ocean solutions for climate, livelihoods and sustainability

objectives, that support and increase the resilience of local communities, coastal areas and national economies;

31. Supporting smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples, and local communities in the green economic transition given their key role in ecosystems stewardship;
32. Identify, prioritize and mainstream adaptation into development policy-making and planning, including in the context of national plans and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs);
33. Building effective partnership between Africa and other regions, to meet the needs for financial, technical and technological support, and knowledge sharing for climate change adaptation;
34. Promoting investments in urban infrastructure including through upgrading informal settlements and slum areas to build climate resilient cities and urban centres.
35. Strengthening early warning systems and climate information services, as well as taking early action to protect lives, livelihoods and assets and inform long-term decision-making related to climate change risks. We emphasise the importance of embracing indigenous knowledge and citizen science in both adaptation strategies and early warning systems;
36. Accelerating implementation of the African Union *Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032)*

#### **More is needed.**

37. We call for collective global action to mobilise the necessary capital for both development and climate action, echoing the statement of the Paris Summit for a New Global Financing Pact that no country should ever have to choose between development aspirations and climate action. To achieve the necessary levels of urgency, scale, and inclusivity, we consider the following elements to be indispensable;
38. We call for concrete action on the proposals to reform the multilateral financial system currently under discussion specifically to (a) build resilience to climate shocks, including better deployment of the SDR liquidity mechanism and disaster suspension clauses; better leveraging of the balance sheets of MDBs to scale up concessional finance, and addressing the inordinate disparities emerging and advanced economies cost of financing from the capital markets

39. Full implementation of the measures included in the Paris Agenda for People and the Planet – including:

- i. Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) capitalization and deployment reform, to (1) increase available concessional capital with MDBs, (2) channel a greater proportion of this concessional capital to emerging and frontier economies, and (3) incentivize investment in climate-aligned opportunities
- ii. Redesign of the MDB governance, to ensure a “fit for purpose” system with appropriate representation, voice, and agency of all countries
- iii. Measures to improve debt management, including:
  - a) the inclusion of ‘debt pause clauses’, and
  - b) the proposed expert review of the Common Framework and the Debt Sustainability Analysis
- iv. Focused innovative solutions to address the high cost of capital in Africa, such as the partial foreign exchange (FX) guarantee for emerging and frontier economies;

1. Further acceleration of global capital mobilization to simultaneously and more effectively tackle the global crises of climate change and development:

- i. New debt relief interventions and instruments to pre-empt debt default – with the ability to
  - a) extend sovereign debt tenor, and
  - b) include a 10-year grace period
- ii. New universal global instruments to collect additional revenue
- iii. Decisive action on the Promotion of inclusive and effective international tax cooperation at the United Nations (Resolution A/C.2/77/L.11/REV.1)– with the aim to reduce Africa’s loss of \$ 27 billion annual corporate tax revenue through profit shifting, by at least 50% by 2030 and 75% by 2050
- iv. Additional measures to crowd in and de-risk private capital, such as blended finance instruments, purchase commitments, industrial policy collaboration, and guarantee mechanisms, which should be informed by the risks that drive lack of private capital deployment at scale;

2. To accomplish this vision of economic transformation in harmony with our climate needs, we call upon the international community to contribute to the following:

- i. Increasing Africa’s renewable generation capacity from 56 GW in 2022 to at least 300 GW by 2030, both to address energy poverty and to bolster the global supply of cost-effective clean energy for industry;
- ii. Shifting the energy intensive primary processing of Africa’s raw material exports to the continent, also to serve as an anchor demand for our renewable energy and a means of rapidly reducing global emissions;

- iii. Call for access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, including technologies that consist of processes and innovation methods to support Africa's green industrialisation and transition.
  - iv. Designing global and regional trade mechanisms in a manner that enables products from Africa to compete on fair and equitable terms;
3. Call that trade-related environmental tariffs and non-tariff barriers must be subject to multilateral discussions and agreements and not be unilateral, arbitrary or discriminatory environment measures;
- i. Accelerating efforts to decarbonize the transport, industrial and electricity sectors through the use of smart, digital and highly efficient technologies and systems.
  - ii. Reducing the cost of capital for investment in Africa, through a mix of availing credit rating data, smart guarantee instruments and additional concessional finance to attract private capital;
  - iii. Designing industry policies that incentivize global investment to locations that offer the most and substantial climate benefits, while ensuring benefits for local communities;
  - iv. Implementing a mix of measures that elevate Africa share of carbon markets.

## CALL TO ACTION

### We, therefore

1. *Call* upon world leaders to appreciate that decarbonizing the global economy is also an opportunity to contribute to equality and shared prosperity;
2. *Invite* Development Partners from both the global south and north to align and coordinate their technical and financial resources directed toward Africa to promote sustainable utilization of Africa's natural assets for the continent's progression toward low carbon development, and contributing to global decarbonization;
3. *Call* acceleration of the on-going initiatives to reform the multilateral financial system and global financial architecture including the Bridgetown Initiative, the Accra-Marrakech Agenda, the UN Secretary General's SDG Stimulus Proposal and the Paris Summit for a New Global Financing Pact;
4. *Urge* the efforts to refine the G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments, but remain concerned that these efforts lack both adequacy and timeliness;
5. *Call* for a comprehensive and systemic response to the incipient debt crisis outside of default frameworks to create the fiscal space that all developing countries' need to finance development and climate action;

6. We note that multilateral finance reform is necessary but not sufficient to provide the scale of climate financing the world needs to achieve 45 percent emission reduction required to meet the Paris 2030 agreements, without which keeping global warming to 1.5% will be in serious jeopardy. Additionally, that the scale of financing required to unlock Africa's climate positive growth is beyond the borrowing capacity of national balance sheets, or at the risk premium that Africa is currently paying for private capital
7. We urge world leaders to rally behind the proposal for a **[global]** carbon taxation regime including a carbon tax on fossil fuel trade, maritime transport and aviation, that may also be augmented by a global financial transaction tax (FTT) to provide dedicated affordable and accessible finance for climate positive investments at scale and ringfencing of these resources and decision making from geopolitical and national interests.
8. *Propose to establish* a new financing architecture that is responsive to Africa's needs including debt restructuring and relief, including the development of a new Global Climate Finance Charter through UNGA and COP processes by 2025;
9. *Decide* to establish the **Africa Climate Summit** as a **biennial event** convened by African Union and hosted by AU Member States, to set the continent's new vision taking into consideration emerging global climate and development issues;
10. *Decide also* that this Declaration will serve as a basis for Africa's common position in the global climate change process to COP 28 and beyond;
11. *Request* African Union Commission to develop an implementation framework and roadmap for this Declaration and to make Climate Change an AU theme for the Year 2025 or 2026.

**ADOPTED** by African Heads of State and Government in the presence of global leaders and high-level representatives on 6 September 2023 in Nairobi Kenya