



Climate Justice is at the Heart of Just Transitions

Statement from the faith communities to the Plenary of the High Level Ministerial Segment

24rd Session of the Conference of the Parties **(COP24)**
14th Session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the
Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol **(CMP14)**
United Nations Climate Change Conference
Katowice, Poland
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Mr. President
Distinguished Participants,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As faith communities, we have engaged with climate change policy and action for many years as a matter of justice. Many of our members, constituencies, partners and communities are at the forefront of destructive climate change impacts: they are losing their livelihoods, homes, lands, identities, cultures and lives. As climate change continues to accelerate, the cry of the impoverished and the groaning of the Earth grow stronger. Our faiths demand that we act for the protection of the vulnerable and as caretakers of Mother Earth..

Though some of our governments are beginning to wake up to the perils posed by climate change, we are extremely dissatisfied with the lethargic pace and lack of aspiration. Thus far, commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions as part of the Paris Agreement are vastly inadequate to meet the safer target of 1.5°C warming above pre-industrial levels. The core problem is that our economies and societies continue to seek infinite economic expansion on a planet shaped by natural boundaries and limits.

Fasting is a religious and spiritual practice in many of our traditions, including indigenous traditions. To attain the 1.5°C temperature limit, we need to embark on a 'carbon fast' in our personal, community, national and global lives. Together our world needs to transition from a carbon-intensive, extractive and growth-centric economy to a decarbonised, regenerative and redistributive economy.

This entails radical mitigation and adaptation measures, technological innovations, profound lifestyle changes, supportive and well-coordinated national and global policies and institutional arrangements, as well as deep-seated transformations in the way we invest, produce, and consume.

These shifts will not be without costs. Social measures and systems ought to be put in place to ensure that the price of adjustment is not paid by those who are most affected by climate change, contribute the least to it and have scant resources to deal with it.

But these shifts must also happen rapidly. With an estimated 10- to 12-year window to tackle climate change and prevent its most catastrophic effects, there is simply no time to lose in dismissal or denial of strong scientific evidence and in short-sighted competition for political and economic gain.

Wielding the language of courage and hope over fear and despair, we, as faith communities, continue to uphold the vision of a future of wellbeing and mutual flourishing for humanity, future generations and all creation.

We invite you to join us in a common pilgrimage to seek and live out alternative social, economic and political pathways towards a carbon-neutral, sustainable and equitable world. It is within our grasp if we act *now*!

Therefore, we urge the 24th Conference of Parties (COP 24) to:

Deliver the Paris Rulebook based on climate justice principles and to work towards a just transition to a decarbonised, regenerative economy now;

Ramp up nationally determined contributions to ensure global warming does not exceed the safer limit of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels;

Ensure the transfer of adequate financial and technological resources to poor, vulnerable countries for mitigation, adaptation and resilience-building; and

Deliver concrete action on loss and damage by further developing the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.