



# **PAN AFRICAN CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE**

Nairobi, Kenya, 29 May 2009

## **Statement to the Special AMCEN Session on Climate change by Mr. Mithika Mwenda, PACJA Coordinator**

**Your Excellency the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;**

**Distinguished Delegates;**

**The able Secretariat of UNEP/ROA;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

The Pan African Climate Justice Alliance is delighted to have the opportunity to address this important Forum in such a historic and important year as we marshal our troops to win a climate change deal in Copenhagen that assures vulnerable people in Africa descent livelihoods.

Achieving a deal that is fair, equitable, ecologically just and adequate will not be easy, but it is almost indispensable. Copenhagen, thus, must be a key turning point for climate justice – a crucial milestone on the journey to stabilizing the Earth's climate and securing the rights and aspirations of all people.

### **The injustice of climate change in Africa**

The global impacts of, and responsibilities for, climate change are unequally shared. The tragic irony is that those with the least responsibility for climate change stand to suffer most from current and future consequences. Without intervention, climate change is likely to exacerbate existing global inequalities. The developmental gains secured in Africa are at risk of being wiped out and the challenge of achieving sustainable development, particularly the Millennium Development Goals, will become even more difficult and urgent.

The 53 African countries are responsible for less than 4% of global emissions and have over 15% of the global population. The developed countries have emitted almost three quarters of all historical emissions but they represent less than one fifth of the world's population. Africa is not

Further more, deforestation and other land uses change are currently estimated to account for over 30% of green house gas emissions.

### **The Global Environment Facility (GEF)**

PACJA realises that while new funding mechanisms are being put in place, some interim measures will have to exist. If the GEF is to be used as one of the interim financing mechanisms, its governance must be given a significant and rapid overhaul to make it more efficient and easier to access. There is widespread frustration with, and distrust towards, the GEF in Africa. One member of our alliance related that in his country, people joke that it is easier to get a camel through the eye of a needle than it is to get money out of the GEF.

### **African Governments' support for climate change negotiations and national action**

The recent global financial crisis and enthusiasm with which the developed nations responded with generous bail outs and other rescue measures demonstrate their capacity to deal with emergencies. However, their reluctance to exhibit similar response to the climate-induced catastrophes in Africa clearly shows their lack of good faith. Our negotiators must not fail to bear that in mind while dialoguing for a post-2012 climate change agreement.

Recognizing that African governments are the primary duty bearers for our peoples, PACJA urges them to demonstrate leadership on climate change by:

- Developing an international engagement strategy that puts pressure on the industrialized countries primarily responsible for historic emissions to repay their adaptation debt to developing countries by committing to full financing and compensation for the adverse effects of climate change on all affected countries, groups and people;
- Ensuring that our climate change negotiation teams are well supported and resourced, both financially and in terms of skilled experts.
- Ensuring consistency and continuity of skilled African negotiators at UNFCCC meetings.
- Urgently establishing and implementing national climate change strategies in a consultative, multi-stakeholder manner, ensuring buy-in from all ministries. These strategies must be gender sensitive.
- Ensuring that climate change is mainstreamed in all national developmental agenda.

**Mr. President, distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,** PACJA thanks AMCEN and the African Group of negotiators for their continued effort and leadership in consolidating a common negotiating position, which, no doubt, will tilt the scale towards a pro-people agreement once the community of nations gather in Copenhagen later in the year. We have the numbers, and this is the time to put them into use. The African civil society, and indeed the people of Africa, will be watching the run up to Copenhagen and the work of our delegations and Governments with keen interest and expectation. PACJA is willing to constructively engage with you, and continually contribute to this effort wherever possible.

Thank you.