

**Youth Statement to the 3rd Special Session of AMCEN on Climate Change
(Nairobi, Kenya. 25 - 29 May 2009)**

We the African youth, under the auspices of the Africa Youth Initiative on Climate Change, present this statement to the 3rd Special Session of AMCEN on Climate Change.

Deeply concerned by the havoc wrecked by climate change and variability on African Societies with the consequent exacerbation of poverty, food insecurity, deterioration of health and a general decline of the continent's welfare, African youth of unprecedented numbers are and have vowed to continually work on adapting to it, mitigating its effects and seeking a fair, just, equitable and sustainable solution. African youth are organized and networked across their political, socio-cultural and geographical borders to concertedly work towards making a positive change. They are also advocating for substantive involvement and engagement in policy and decision making processes at the national, regional and international fronts.

Riding on our success and in the spirit of intergenerational equity we call upon our African Governments to acknowledge the role of the African Youth in the Climate Change discourse at all levels

Conscious of the importance to " SEAL THE DEAL" during the COP 15 as a hallmark towards Post Kyoto era, we now, more than ever implore our Governments, as a duty to their sons and daughters, to heed our call, we as the custodians of your posterity, and take decisive steps at the international negotiations to salvage our continent and historians will judge you rightly, as men and women, who rose to the occasion and redeemed our common aboard from the precipice of climatic destruction.

Reiterating the agreements in the AMCEN 12th session that Africa must speak with one voice in advancing the continent's interest in negotiations for the climate regime beyond 2012;

We African Youth therefore:

Express our gratitude for being involved in this process during this conference. However, we decry the poor youth representation at the international level. To illustrate this, we cite COP 14 in Poznan which had, commendably, over 500 youth participants. Sadly, only 5 of this youth were from Africa despite the continents high stakes in the Climate Change Debate. Consequently, our voice was barely heard. We, therefore, urge our Governments to support a youth delegation to Copenhagen to enable us present our regional message more resoundingly, thus complementing your efforts. In the same breath, we wish to encourage with enthusiasm the inclusion of the youth in the official African Governments' delegations. As a gesture of your sincerity to the youth of Africa, may it be found fit to appoint youth representatives in your national delegations.

Applaud the formation of the African High Level Expert Panel on Climate Change, the Regional Network for Adaptation in Africa and CLIMEDEV-Africa. While at it, we take this early opportunity to unequivocally state the need and hope for youth representation in these initiatives drawn from the existing pool of highly skilled, competent and motivated youth.

Salute you all for your efforts in combating Climate Change and fronting the African Climate Agenda, we wish to acknowledge the looming expertise gap in the not so distant future. Our active engagement will thus avert such a crisis by affording us an opportunity for grooming, knowledge and experience acquisition as well as ensuring continuity and improvement of Climate Change Programmes in Africa. It will also promote the uptake of appropriate development technologies by the youth, enhance technology transfer and cement initiated North-South linkages among the youth that will be carried into the future.

Acknowledge the great potential of Climate Change Programmes in creating employment and call upon African Governments, CLIMDEV-Africa and other initiatives to tap into and support our innovativeness, creativity, vigour and enthusiasm to initiate youth oriented and youth driven Climate Change Projects

Strongly urge our respective Governments to adopt sustainable lifestyles at individual levels, formulate and enforce national Climate Change policies and promote both formal and non-formal climate change education for all.

Young people are important stakeholders in environmental decision-making processes. We are consumers, producers, victims, and beneficiaries. We are brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters. We are the ones who will live in a world shaped by your decisions. Let us now work together for our common future.

Please join us.

Thank you.