



**To His Excellency Mr. António Guterres  
Secretary-General of the United Nations**

**To Ms. Annalena Baerbock  
President of the 80th UN General Assembly**

**To Mr. Simon Stiell,  
Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC**

**Subject: Letter on the occasion of the United Nations General  
Assembly /**

**“UN Secretary General Special High-level Event on Climate  
Action”**

10 September 2025

Your Excellencies,

We the Bishops of the Global South are honoured to bring to your attention the “Message from the Catholic Episcopal Conferences and Councils of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean on the occasion of COP30 – *A Call for Climate Justice and the Common Home: Ecological Conversion, Transformation and Resistance to False Solutions.*”

This statement, prepared jointly by the Churches of the Global South, has already been presented to Pope Leo XIV and to our local churches, as a sign of shared responsibility and commitment to our common home.

We write to you in a spirit of good will and great concern. We welcome the major efforts of the UN Secretary General, the President of the General Assembly and the UNFCCC in trying to secure COP30 deliver an outcome responding to the dimension of the global climate crisis.

We welcome the UN Secretary General recognising “Climate change is a factor of insecurity, of instability (...), if you look at the floods and the droughts in many areas, the increase of poverty that they generate, the increase of anger they generate” and his call on “countries to lock ambition

into the next round of national climate plans, or NDCs (...) and to submit new plans aligned with the 1.5°C limit”.

We welcome **his invitation to all governments to present their NDCs at a high-level event in September 2025** and write to you on this important occasion since we are very much concerned about a potential lack of ambition to secure the 1.5 thresholds<sup>1</sup>.

We welcome the recognition of the encyclical letter *Laudato Si* by the COP 30 Presidency “as both an ethical compass and a pragmatic guide for this global mobilization” and its efforts to make COP30 also a Global Ethical Stocktake<sup>2</sup>.

We welcome the words of the incoming President of the UN General Assembly highlighting the need for sustainable development “Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will remain elusive without “bold, ambitious, accelerated, just and transformative actions”.

Inspired by both *Laudato Si*’ by Pope Francis and Pope Leo XIV’s call to live an integral ecology with justice, we call for a profound ecological conversion. Ten years since the publication of *Laudato Si*’ and the signing of the Paris Agreement, the countries of the world have not responded with the necessary urgency.

The Church will not remain silent. We will continue to raise our voice alongside science, civil society, and the most vulnerable, with truth, courage and consistency, until justice is done.

## **Our demand**

The climate crisis is an urgent reality, with global warming reaching 1.55°C in 2024. It is not just a technical problem: it is an existential issue of justice, dignity and care for our common home.

The science is clear: we must limit global warming to 1.5°C to avoid catastrophic effects. We must never abandon this goal. It is the Global South and future generations who are already suffering the consequences.

We reject false solutions such as ‘green’ capitalism, technocracy, the commodification of nature and extractivism, which perpetuate exploitation and injustice.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2025-07-22/secretary-generals-remarks-climate-action-moment-of-opportunity-supercharging-the-clean-energy-age-delivered-scroll-down-for-all-french>

<sup>2</sup> <https://cop30.br/en/brazilian-presidency/letters-from-the-presidency>

Instead, we demand:

Equity: Rich nations must pay their ecological debt with fair climate finance without further indebting the Global South, to recover losses and damages in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania.

Justice: Promote economic degrowth and phase out fossil fuels, ending all new fossil fuel infrastructure and properly taxing those who have profited from them, ushering in a new era of governance that includes and prioritises the communities most affected by the climate crises, the loss of biodiversity and climate migration as a challenge of justice and human rights.

Protection: Listen to and defend Indigenous peoples, ecosystems and impoverished communities, recognising the greater vulnerability of women, girls, the marginalised, as well as future generations and of the highly impacted regions such as the Pacific Islands in Oceania.

### **Call to action**

We urge decision-makers to:

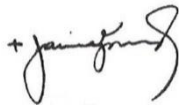
- ✓ Fulfil the Paris Agreement, commit to new and enhanced NDCs in line with the 1.5-degree threshold and climate justice and implement these NDCs commensurate with the urgency of the climate crisis;
- ✓ Ensure sufficient climate finance – to recover losses and damages and build resilient communities – without further indebting the Global South. Use COP30 as a moment to agree on a joint multilateral mechanism that aims to accelerate and support people's and communities' transitions by facilitating access to financing and technical assistance for just transitions that foster people-centered development, in accordance with the preservation of biodiversity, and by taking measures to remove barriers to transition, such as debt;
- ✓ Put the common good above profit;
- ✓ Transform the economic system towards a restorative model that prioritises solidarity, people's well-being and ensures conditions for sustainable life on the planet;
- ✓ Promote climate and nature policies anchored in human rights and the rights of nature;
- ✓ Share and implement ethical, decentralised and appropriate technological solutions;

- ✓ Achieve zero deforestation by 2030, restore vital aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, end loss of biodiversity.

We invite you and all decision makers and people of good will to join forces to strengthen democratic multilateral processes, such as the Paris Agreement, and rebuild trust in cooperation and dialogue, uniting us as humanity, North and South, for the well-being of the planet.

We remain confident that genuine dialogue, grounded in truth and justice, can guide the international community towards the profound transformations required. The urgency of this moment leaves no room for delay, compromise, or half-measures: may our common efforts at COP30 and beyond foster real hope, safeguard creation, and ensure a dignified future for the generations to come.

Respectfully yours,



✠ **Cardinal Jaime Spengler, O.F.M.**  
Archbishop of Porto Alegre, Brazil  
President of CELAM



✠ **Cardinal Filipe Neri Ferrao**  
Archbishop of Goa and Daman, India  
President of FABC



✠ **Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo Besungu, O.F.M. Cap.**  
Archbishop of Kinshasa, Congo (Dem. Rep.)  
President of SECAM

Attachment: Full Statement of the Southern Churches on COP30