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CIDSE PRESS RELEASE

COP26 misses the chance to deliver real ambitious action and transformation

After 25 years of climate negotiations, the 26th Conference of Parties' decision, according to CIDSE and many other civil society organisations, recognises the climate emergency to stay below 1.5°C, but still fails to address it, and with it the needs of the **most vulnerable**. This outcome reflects the lack of fair access and participation of many civil society organisations -especially from the Global South- whose role as observers is essential for climate justice in their regions.

By not addressing the climate crisis properly, nations also avoided challenging historic power imbalances or old colonisation patterns and, in this way, did not practice real **solidarity**, for instance by allocating sorely needed money for loss and damage. *“Loss and damage is about addressing climate change here and now. In the present as in the future, nobody seems to be willing to fully take their responsibilities. What’s left are promises for a better future, future money, future technologies but how much can we trust that if in the here and now governments cannot show the required ambition?”* Said François Delvaux, CIDSE Senior Advisor on Climate Justice.

According to Lydia Machaka, CIDSE Climate Justice and Energy Officer *“The outcome is self-explanatory: impressive political statements without comprehensive and inclusive civil society input and without consideration for those already severely affected by climate change result in a mediocre outcome. The presidency, among others, rejected the proposal by AOSIS, G77 and China for a finance facility for loss and damage to receive funding for loss and damage, in addition to funding to mitigation and adaptation demonstrating a lack of real solidarity. Indeed, we live in tough times of ongoing extreme events during a health pandemic, but governments’ decisions at COP26, especially rich countries should have led and at least specified how soon **fossil fuel** and subsidies will end to demonstrate the **urgency**, seriousness and the hope for effectively addressing these crises according to historic responsibility”*. If the famous COP26 catchphrase: climate “blah blah blah!” is not sounding the alarm of the public’s rapid eroding trust in governments’ failure to deliver decisive climate action across the world – because of prolonged and broken promises – then another eminent crisis may result – public mistrust. It is very easy to overlook the critical role that values play during and after the highly technical discussions for addressing climate change. **Trust** is the basis upon which the legitimacy of public institutions like our governments are created, and it is critical for maintaining social cohesion. Public trust is one of the major success factors of a wide variety of government programmes and governments have a massive job ahead to restore it through their future climate policies and actions.

For many, COP26 was seen as the defining moment to take bold decisions for setting us on track to stay below the **1.5°C temperature goal** of avoiding the worst climate changes in the next decade. Real ambitious action and transformation are the only option we need to stay alive, especially for communities in poor and vulnerable countries. However current national pledges to address climate mitigation put us on track for a global warming of about 2.4°C and with each year of delay in actually reducing global emissions, this task will get more difficult, and more costly for us all. *“COP26 could have been the place for rich countries to step up and take the right decisions towards climate justice, which is inextricably linked to the colonizing and extractive economic model that has been fuelling the climate crisis and crushing people. Instead, this COP has yet again failed to deliver real ambitious action and transformation. This is a missed opportunity to change course and reach an inclusive economic system that supports healthy and thriving ecosystems and protects human rights*

and dignity for all. The most vulnerable, such as indigenous peoples and women, will keep suffering from this. There is still a tough fight for climate justice ahead of us.” said Josianne Gauthier, CIDSE Secretary General.

Below is an analysis of the final decision on key points:

- **Climate Ambition:** For the first time since the Paris agreement, Parties are making the call to accelerate the **phasing-out of coal** without a clear timeline. However, this was weakened (or rather phased-down) last-minute following India’s will. So long as wealthy and powerful countries do not show the needed leadership in making stronger commitments, we are likely to see reactions such as this one from emerging economies who see no incentive to make the sacrifices while the rich nations continue to benefit from their fossil fuel economies.
- **Climate Finance:** The fulfilment of the \$100bn goal, availability and accessibility of resources are key. Parties have failed to meet existing target to provide \$100bn of climate finance per year by 2020 as part of the ambition to stay under 1.5 degrees. However, developed country Parties are urged to at least double their climate finance for adaptation to developing country Parties by 2025, from 2019 levels in order to achieve a balance between mitigation and adaptation. So far there is no indication for a post 2025 finance goal.
- **Loss and damage:** The cover text urges parties to provide enhanced and additional support for activities addressing loss and damage associated with climate change impacts but what is missing so far is L&D finance, and a delivery plan to mobilize it and channel it to countries. Parties failed to commit to providing new, additional and needs-based loss and damage finance for the victims of global warming.
- **Article 6 (carbon markets):** Far too many communities and the ecosystems that they depend on have been harmed by the Kyoto Protocol’s Clean Development Mechanism with no safeguards and no Independent Grievance Mechanism to turn to for justice. It is an improvement to see the inclusion of human rights in the operative text of Article 6. But the text still doesn’t recognize indigenous peoples’ right to Free Prior and Informed Consent and there are loopholes that could undermine the human rights commitments made in the text. Governments and project financiers have a moral obligation to ensure that climate mitigation and adaptation projects centre on human rights, inclusive participation, and environmental integrity. Failure to do so could undercut ambition and effectiveness thus potentially defeating the purpose of the Paris Agreement.

Despite this outcome, we draw **courage** to continue this fight, so long as our brothers and sisters around the world, the Indigenous communities, the human rights defenders, the climate vulnerable, keep fighting. Furthermore, we are in the middle of the climate crisis and we don’t actually have a choice. We can’t give up and we can only hope that the tide will change when enough people stand together in solidarity and put their personal interests behind the greater good of the planet and of those who call it home. We also find a lot of hope in the **youth’s commitment** and leadership on climate. We will keep holding national governments accountable for their promises and remind each other of our responsibilities to care for the earth and inspire collective climate action because it is for our **common good** and a matter of **justice**. Our attention is now towards COP 27 in Africa and we hope that this will be an important opportunity to bring about the real transformation that is deeply needed.

Notes to the Editors:

- During COP26, CIDSE carried out several activities with its network of young supporters, mainly through the “Change for the Planet- Care for the People” initiative, connecting people mobilising for climate justice across several countries. One of the highlights goes back to 6th November, date of the global premiere of the CIDSE’s new documentary: [“The Future Lies with Youth”: Stories from young climate activists](#), now available on [You Tube](#) (more details are available in a [press release here](#)). Inspired by the connection to the CIDSE policy officer in Glasgow, the young supporters also edited and launched a [video appeal](#) to world leaders at COP26

- Find out CIDSE’s activities and key messages around COP26 [here](#).
- For CIDSE, these were key elements that determine how effective the COP26 decision outcomes delivers transformative change.
 1. **Commitment to keep 1.5°C alive:** all countries must urgently accelerate their current national plans, policies, and measures in order to substantially decrease emissions by 2030 and keep global temperatures below 1.5°C according to what science, equity and justice requires. Also, governments must clearly spell out their long-term objectives and strategies for rapid emissions reductions and zero emissions as early as 2040 while preserving biodiversity and environmental integrity.
 2. **Consign fossil fuels to history once and for all:** The world’s major emitters need to collectively commit to consigning fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) to history to allow the global transition to low-carbon energy systems. This should also be reflected in the domestic and international finance including development finance institutions.
 3. **Deliver the money promised to tackle the climate crisis:** High-income countries must mobilize at least \$100bn in climate finance every year beyond the year 2025 to help low-income countries to effectively address climate change and transition to renewable and efficient energy systems that will deliver universal access to energy. This climate finance should be given as grants instead of loans to prevent making the debt crisis worse.
 4. **Address irreversible and inadaptable climate impacts right now:** New and additional finance for Loss & Damage (L&D) must be urgently raised to support affected communities. L&D should also be treated as an equal standing item on the COP agenda alongside mitigation and adaptation, and as a progress indicator toward delivering on the Paris Agreement.
 5. **Carbon markets and trading is not an effective tool for national emissions reductions:** without a robust accounting rules, gender responsiveness, human rights safeguards, environmental integrity, no carryover of projects from earlier schemes, mandatory inclusive stakeholder consultation and an independent grievance mechanism, Article 6 defeats the purpose of the Paris Agreement.
- The Holy See delegation also expressed disappointment for the final COP26 final decision. “Sadly, we must acknowledge how far we remain from achieving the goals set for tackling climate change. This cannot continue! There is no time to waste. our brothers and sisters are already suffering from this climate crisis. Now is the time to act, urgently, courageously and responsibly”.

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