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ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES (AACC) CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE (CETA)

CONCEPT NOTE



AACC CLIMATE CHANGE ROUND TABLE MEETING

VOICES FROM FAITH COMMUNITIES IN AFRICA ON CLIMATE CHANGE: PRIORITIES AND KEY MESSAGES FOR COP26

19TH & 20TH MAY 2021

HILTON HOTEL, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Preamble

Two in every three persons worldwide live in regions of severe water scarcity. Climate change affects rainfall patterns, meaning both drought and flooding will be more common, and more intense in the future. Just in 2020, the Africa region experienced a combination of cyclones, droughts, severe flooding among the many effects of climate change. The world is only ONE planet, and ACTION IS NEEDED NOW to save it. Even a small increase in global temperatures will have devastating consequences to living creatures, flora and fauna. The world cannot continue to cause anthropogenic climate change which is driven by human-caused emissions to the atmosphere unabated. Carbon emissions have to be mitigated. The rainforests which are the world's lungs are threatened by climate change. Current statistics indicate that the world is heading alarmingly towards the upper limit of global warming. Global warming is causing long-lasting changes to our climate system. It threatens with irreversible consequences if mitigative actions are not taken.

In Glasgow at the COP 26, AACC is calling on politicians to take serious action on climate change, not looking for the next photo opportunity.

Official negotiations

The official negotiations take place over two weeks. The first week is primarily technical negotiations by government officials. The second week is dominated by the high level Ministerial and Heads of State meetings. The most challenging issues of the negotiations go to the Ministers to make the final negotiated decisions.



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There are several technical issues to be finalized at COP26, this includes some difficult sticking points which were carried over from COP25 in Madrid in 2019. Issues which will be brought to COP26 include:

- **Carbon market mechanisms**, which would allow countries to purchase carbon credits (reductions) from another country to allow the purchasing country to continue to emit within its borders. Carbon markets may also include trade in 'negative' emissions such as carbon absorption through forestry. There are very diverse views from Parties on the extent and rules for these markets.
- **Funding for Loss and damage**: While Loss and damage is a core part of the Paris Agreement there is no mechanism as yet within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to fund responses when vulnerable countries experience loss and damage. This is viewed as a critical factor by Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to unlock the negotiations but is resisted by many wealthy nations.
- Discussions over the delivery of the **\$100 bn finance target** are likely, and again will be a critical factor for less developed countries. Additionally, COP26 is likely to set the next target for climate finance to be achieved by 2025.
- An increasingly important aspect of the climate debate is around '**nature-based solutions**' (NBS). That is how nature (forests, agriculture and ecosystems) can become a climate solution for absorbing carbon and for protecting against climate impacts. COP26 will start to discuss how to integrate NBS into the Paris implementation strategy.
- The other element of the 'Paris rulebook' which requires agreement is on **common timeframes** for countries' National Determined Contributions (NDCs) - whether those timeframes should be five years or ten years. The shorter timeframe means revision of NDCs more frequently, potentially driving greater ambition than if they were only revised every decade.

Why the round table conversations?

Faith leaders in the continent will not remain silent as people across Africa and the world continue to suffer from the effects of climate change. Faith leaders need to push for higher ambition and commitments for touchable action to confront climate change. Faith leaders are witnessing the effects of rising temperatures, excessive droughts, changing weather patterns leading to cyclones and excessive flooding, conflicts arising from competition for resources such as depleting grazing lands due to droughts etc.



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Objectives

The conversations will aim to meet the following two objectives:

- a) **Contribute to framing the focus of the AACC program on climate change.**
- b) **Contribute to the AACC key asks / position towards the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP 26) which will be held in Glasgow on 1 – 12 November 2021.**

Methodology

The round table meeting will have presentations and more discussions and prioritization.

1. **The first day** of the consultation will hear **from the CoP Presidency Civil Society Division** in terms of preparations and also from **the African Union on the Africa positions**, and from PACJA and the possibilities for churches to engage the African Union position.
2. **Work for the second day** will be structured in roundtables hearing more from participants / representatives from the regions on where priorities are and must be for both AACC programming and for advocacy towards COP 26; and will work through an AACC draft position paper / key tasks for COP 26 together.

Expected Outcome

Two major outcomes are expected – these being:

- a) **Prioritized areas for AACC climate change programming.**
- b) **A draft position paper / key asks for CoP 26 engagements (prior, during and after).**

Timeframe / Duration/ Location

The round table meeting is planned to take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 18 -20 May 2021 hosted by the AACC Liaison Office to the African Union.