

# **Declaration in Durban: “The fight against climate change is a fight against neoliberal capitalism, landlessness, dispossession, hunger, poverty and the re-colonization of the territories of the people’s of Africa and the global South”**

Friday 16 December 2011, by [La Via Campesina](#) (Date first published: 5 December 2011).

## **Assembly of the Oppressed, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011, Durban, South Africa.**

As the Assembly of the Oppressed we are gathered here to demand the transformation of the entire neo liberal capitalist system. The fight against climate change is a fight against neoliberal capitalism, landlessness, dispossession, hunger, poverty and the re-colonization of the territories of the people’s of Africa and the global South. We are here to declare that direct action is the only weapon of the oppressed people of the world to end all forms of oppression in the world.

We are here in Durban, South Africa where the 17<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference of Parties is taking place and are discussing false solutions to the climate crisis. And we can see that the future of Mother Earth and of humanity is in peril as those responsible for nature’s destruction are attempting to escape their responsibility and erase history.

We, La Via Campesina, the global movement of peasants, small-scale and agricultural family farmers, is severely dismayed at the attempts of the developed countries to further escape their historic responsibility to make real emission cuts and push for more false and market based solutions to the climate crisis.

Here in Durban, they are discussing a “new mandate” as an outcome of the COP 17, one which contains market mechanisms and a voluntary pledge system in order to move away from the mandated program of working towards legally binding commitments to cut emissions. Also, developed countries are working hard to escape their historical responsibility and not pay their climate debt by pushing for a green climate fund that involves private capital and the World Bank. Finally, there is a push to include agriculture in the negotiations, treating agriculture as a carbon sink rather than a source of food and livelihood. For La Via Campesina, with this trend of negotiations, it is better to have no deal than a bad deal that condemns humanity and our planet to a future of climate catastrophe.

We are now at the worst moment for agriculture and small farmers and for nature. The impacts of climate change are steadily worsening, leading to harvest failures, destruction of habitats and homes, hunger and famine and loss of lives. The future of humanity and the planet is in critical

danger and if these false solutions push through, it will be a catastrophe for nature, future generations and the whole planet.

We therefore demand to all governments in the negotiations:

- For all countries from the global South to stand up for their people and to defend the people and the planet with dignity and conviction. The government of South Africa has already sold out its people in this regard.
- For all the developed countries to live up to their historical responsibility of causing this climate crisis and to pay their climate debt and commit themselves to at least 50% domestic emission reductions based on 1990 levels, without conditions and excluding carbon markets or other offset mechanisms.
- Stop industrial farming that promotes pollution and climate change through high levels of use of petroleum based chemicals
- Governments must support agro-ecology
- For all countries to listen and work for their people and not be under the control of transnational corporations.
- For all countries to stop trying to save capitalism and making the people, including small farmers, pay for their economic and financial crisis.

We as La Via Campesina, demand the implementation of the people's global agreement on climate agreed on in Cochabamba. And here in Durban and in a thousand Durbans, we strongly reiterate our solutions to the climate crisis.

- Further global warming must be limited to a rise of 1 degree Celsius only.
- Developed countries must make domestic emission reductions of at least 50% based on 1990 levels, without conditions and excluding carbon markets or other offset mechanisms.
- Developed countries must commit to payment of their climate debt and give funding from at least 6% of their GDP. All funds for this climate finance must be public and be free from the control of the World Bank and private corporations.
- All market mechanisms must be stopped, including REDD, REDD++ and the proposed carbon markets for agriculture.

We reiterate that there will be no solution to climate change and the predatory neo-liberal system that causes it, without the liberation of women, and rural women in particular, from age old patriarchy and sexist discrimination. We therefore demand as part of comprehensive action against patriarchy and sexism:

The promotion of women's land access and rights through targeted redistribution

- Laws and policies must be made responsive to the particular needs of women

We as La Via Campesina, demand an end to the commodification of our Mother Earth reject the mechanisms of the carbon market. Furthermore, we reject the proposed inclusion of a work program on agriculture in the negotiations and reject all proposals of market mechanisms surrounding

agriculture.

We as La Via Campesina and the people of the world have the real solutions to the climate crisis and we call on all governments to heed them before it is too late. At this assembly of the oppressed we declare to the people of the world that the solutions are in their hands. Through building social movements and mobilizing popular struggles for social change the world's people will overcome the close alliance between governments and multinational corporations that is strangling the world. In Africa at the moment this alliance is perpetrating one of the biggest land grabs in history, which would mean more chemical-industrial farming, more poverty and exploitation, and more climate change. The only serious counter to this is the land occupations initiated by the landless themselves. From the perspective of food sovereignty, agrarian reform and climate justice, these land occupations deserve the fullest support.

**Sustainable peasant's agriculture and agroecology cool down the planet.**

Food Sovereignty is the solution!

Peasant agriculture is not for sale!

Globalize the struggle, Globalize the hope!

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