

Climate Change Campaign: The Abuja Declaration

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ANOTHER ENERGY FUTURE IS NECESSARY - ALTERNATIVES EXIST

STOP OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION NOW!

Member groups of Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) from 51 countries including Nigeria's Environmental Rights Action (ERA) and other national and international civil society groups, representatives of Niger Delta Communities and journalists gathered for the International Conference on Climate Change in Abuja from 28th - 29th September 2006. The conference with the theme: "Minimizing Climate Change Impact and Curbing Global Energy Chaos" is one of the activities of the Biennial General Meeting of the Friends of the Earth International.

Observations

Following presentations and robust discussions at the conference, participants observed that:

1. All struggles, whether social, economic or environmental are interlinked with political struggles. Therefore, there is the need to link the different messages from around the world and adopt broad strategies that clearly address the issues of Climate Change and Energy Sovereignty, since it is the flawed and exploitative international economic system that drives the climate change phenomenon.
2. There is the need to synchronize the various energy struggles around the world by adopting a global strategy for resisting environmental degradation, destruction of local livelihoods, and rights abuses associated with corporate controlled energy sourcing and consumption globally.
3. There exist attempts by corporations to promote other sources of energy primarily nuclear as an alternative. Nuclear expansion must be resisted it has inherent and irreversible negative impacts. 4. Alternative energy production must not lead to further impoverishment of peoples.
5. The extraction of crude oil has led to unprecedented human rights abuse, environmental problems, fostering political and social conflicts in the Niger Delta and in other communities globally, which have been responded to by the militarization of community lands and sovereign states. In this militarized condition, women in particular have been victims.

Resolutions

Arising from the observations, participants resolved that:

Another energy future is necessary based upon:

- Abandoning the belief in export led growth in favour of servicing local (basic) needs;
- Restructuring the price and production of energy
- A new approach to restructuring ownership of the energy regimes; and
- Abandoning the mistaken dichotomy between “development and environment”.

We therefore:

1. Endeavor to work with and support community struggles towards energy sovereignty and democratic control of natural resources that will be the basis for alternative fair and just trade regimes that link producers with consumers eliminating corporate led control of our energy systems. It is essential that women are fully involved in all negotiations over energy production and allocation of natural resources.
2. Call for fair trade and just direct deals between producers and consumers, built upon energy sovereignty and the transition to alternative energy that cut out the oil middlemen, oil companies and oil speculators. These direct deals in oil can involve barter (as in Venezuela with Cuba, Argentina, and Uruguay) thereby avoiding the use of the US Dollar.
3. Call on Governments across the world to declare a global moratorium on new oil and gas exploration and development until full eco-restoration and reparations is implemented in communities already impacted by extractive industries.
4. Call on Governments in both South and North to focus more on responsible energy consumption and the development of decentralized democratically controlled technology for easy utilization of clean energy like wind and solar energy.
5. Call on Governments of the South to develop gender responsive and clear policies toward attaining ‘Energy Sovereignty’. Such policy should promote sustainable energy, local community control of energy along with the protection of the environment and local livelihoods from corporate and state abuse.
6. Recognize the alliance between the Nigerian and other governments and the oil multinationals in the form of Joint Venture Agreements that negate communities’ interests. The terms of these JVA must be made public and repudiated. These JVA must be replaced with democratically controlled government and local community agreements.
7. The Niger Delta crisis should be resolved through dialogue and democratic/political interventions. Such interventions must include communal control of communal resources, protection of local political interests and strict enforcement of environmental standards and codes.
8. Neo-liberal trade agreements and economic policies that have the effect of stripping people of their entitlements to basic resources for a just and human existence and increase the impoverishment of peoples’ must be terminated; finally
9. The super profits of the oil multinationals must be redirected towards clean-up reparations, and

the transition to safe energy alternatives under democratic control.

Signed:

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P.S.

* From Foei website.