

**ONE HUMAN FAMILY
ZERO POVERTY
CLIMATE JUSTICE NOW**



Caritas

Caritas Internationalis statement at the 18th Conference of the Parties (COP18) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change - Doha (Qatar)

“I hope that, pursuant to the XVII session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change recently concluded in Durban, the international community will prepare [...] as an authentic “family of nations” and thus with a great sense of solidarity and responsibility towards present and future generations.”¹

23 November 2012

Caritas Internationalis (CI), the Confederation of 165 Catholic relief, social and development organisations in the world, welcomes the opportunity to participate in COP18. In all of its seven global regions, Caritas is deeply committed to working at grass-root level with present and potential victims of climate change and presenting their cases to relevant national, regional and international institutions. Caritas works side by side with the poor to guarantee their **human rights, sustainable livelihood** and **empowerment**, in a perspective of **integral human development**.

A large number of projects are carried out in developing countries, focusing on adaptation, sustainable agriculture and agroecology, disaster risk management and awareness-raising. CI can thus credibly present the views of the most vulnerable and most affected by climate change, defend their rights and collective interests. By its own mission, CI has the institutional responsibility to participate in policy processes shaping the future of international society. CI defends **participatory democracy** fostering a culture of dialogue, taking into account our global interdependence and facilitating our common quest for durable solutions².

In our view, the issues at stake at COP18 are first of all of **ethical nature**: our duty as stewards of Creation admonishes everyone, especially decision-makers, to act **responsibly**, in **solidarity** with one another, to put aside individual interests for the sake of the **common good**³. We call for **climate justice**, ensuring that the most affected by climate change impacts (and who have contributed the least to it) have open access to the financial, knowledge and technology resources required for adaptation and mitigation.

Recent climatic events - the dramatic droughts in Sahel and in the Horn of Africa, the unprecedented drought and hurricane Sandy in the USA - prove the urgency of curbing current trends by firmly

¹ Address of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, 9 January 2012.

² Caritas at Rio: the future from the Caritas perspective, available at www.caritas.org

³ “Climate Justice – Seeking a global ethic”, Caritas Internationalis.

adopting the necessary policy measures. They also demonstrate that nowadays climate change is a challenge we all must address, developing and developed countries alike.

CI calls on governments meeting in Doha from November 26th to December 7th to take the following recommendations in due account:

New binding, just frameworks for mitigation

The hopes created in Durban on future mitigation commitments must be followed in Doha by serious efforts to counter the worrying trends in greenhouse gases (GHG) concentration and rising temperatures.

- A **second commitment period** under the Kyoto Protocol shall be entered by the largest possible number of developed countries, mindful of the above responsibilities. The signatories to this commitment should adopt and implement such emission reduction targets as to achieve, collectively and together with non-Kyoto developed countries, the pledge of more than 40% by 2020, based on 1990 levels. Non-Kyoto developed countries should take on comparable commitments. COP18 shall adopt all necessary amendments to ensure entry into force in 2013 and regulate legal transition during national ratification processes.

- The **Durban Platform for Enhanced Action under the Convention** will be officially launched at COP18. A detailed and ambitious work program must be adopted to foster the elaboration of a new instrument of defined legal status, to be completed in 2015. Such a work program should be based on science, clear rules and on the **equity principle**. Caritas calls UNFCCC Parties to implement the equity principle according to justice and priority consideration for the poor. The ADP work program shall also foresee a **more participative and regular dialogue with civil society**, whose proven expertise shall be sought and used to advance in implementing the UNFCCC.

Climate adaptation and sustainable agriculture for a future without hunger

“Suitable strategies for rural development centred on small farmers and their families should be explored, as well as the implementation of appropriate policies for [...] strengthening the linkage between combating climate change and overcoming poverty.”⁴

- One of the best ways to tackle extreme poverty is to ensure that the 1 billion people living in extreme poverty (mostly living in rural areas) are empowered so as to become active subjects of agriculture-related policies. Hence, we call on the Parties to always take into consideration and be guided by the duty to respect, protect and fulfil human rights, in particular the **right to food**, in the UNFCCC discussions on agriculture. Such discussions should be informed by the findings of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food.

- The international commitment expressed in the **Rio+20 Outcome Document** on enhancing food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture, and the recommendations of the **Committee on World’s Food Security** (CSF 39⁵) on coordinating food security and climate change policies/programmes, require coherent and synergic responses from the UNFCCC.

- Any UNFCCC decision on agriculture shall be validated against the needs of **smallholder farmers**; the latter, and the organisations representing them, must be actively involved in such decisions and their implementation, also at national level. **Adaptation** must be the priority of climate policies related to agriculture, to be pursued by strengthening and adequately funding existing initiatives like the Nairobi Work Program and the work program on loss and damage. Measures agreed to reduce GHG emissions from agriculture should not just benefit industrial large-scale farming. On the contrary, the UNFCCC must duly recognise the importance of **small-scale**

⁴ “If You Want To Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation” Message of His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 2010.

⁵ Committee on World Food Security, Thirty-ninth session, 15-20 October 2012, Final Report.

agriculture, in particular agro-ecology, for its multiple benefits in terms of food security, adaptation and mitigation. The IAASTD report, to which UNFCCC decisions should conform, supports this view.

- The **Green Climate Fund** must be made fully operational at the soonest, easily accessible to small-scale adaptation projects, with priority to those who benefit the most vulnerable rural communities.

Caritas at COP18

The Caritas Internationalis Confederation will be represented in Doha by a delegation composed of Ms Adriana Opromolla (CI Secretariat), Mr Eleazar Gomes (Caritas Asia), Dr Haridas Varikkottil Raman (Caritas India), Mr Tegshbayar Sanduijav (Caritas Mongolia), Mr Stephen Kituku (Caritas Kenya).

Contact: Adriana Opromolla (International Advocacy Officer)

Tel: + 39 342 6014218

e-mail: opromolla@caritas.va