

## **Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Climate Justice for Southeast Asia and South Asia**

*27th March, 2026*

The ongoing devastating wars and global instability highlights Asia's profound climate vulnerability and heavy reliance on fossil fuels, severely compromising regional energy security, deepening debt crises and escalating the climate crisis. Urgent action is imperative. In response, we—experts, academics, and civil society representatives from 12 countries gathered at the Southeast Asia–South Asia Preparatory Meeting for COP31 and the Santa Marta Conference (Kuala Lumpur, March 25–27)—collectively adopt this declaration.

**WE DECLARE THAT** climate finance must be equitable, predictable, grant-based, and driven by local needs, based on the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), as enshrined in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This finance is neither aid, nor charity, nor revenue generated from carbon markets. It is a strict obligation and a climate debt owed by developed countries, arising from their historical emissions and extractive practices. We therefore call for:

- **Developed Countries' Accountability:** We hold developed countries accountable to their financial obligations under Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement. We demand the delivery of the estimated USD 5.1–6.8 trillion required up to 2030, and at least USD 5 trillion annually for climate action in developing countries in the long term.
- **Adequate, Non-Debt-Creating Finance:** The shrinking of development finance and the substitution of public grants with private loans offer no solution. To expand fiscal space and allow developing nations to invest in inclusive transitions, developed countries must provide new, additional, public climate finance alongside comprehensive debt cancellation.
- **Meeting UNFCCC Finance Targets:** We demand credible pathways to fulfill the USD 300 billion annual target through increased inflows to UNFCCC funds. The delivery architecture must be locally led, participatory, gender-responsive, and transparent.
- **Enhanced MDB Accountability and Alternative Sources:** We demand an end to developed countries' reliance on debt-inducing Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) loans as a substitute for direct public grants. To close the finance gap, we urgently call for equitable alternative sources, including targeted taxes on extreme wealth, corporate polluters, maritime shipping, commercial aviation, and private jets.

**WE DECLARE THAT** increasing international cooperation on a global, just, and equitable phase-out of coal, oil, and gas is essential for regional security and planetary well-being. We therefore demand:

- **A Just Transition for Systemic Change:** We demand a transition that decarbonizes and reshapes systems to eradicate poverty, redistribute power, and center women, youth, Indigenous peoples, and marginalized communities. We unequivocally reject false solutions—including carbon removal (Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS)/Direct Air Capture with Carbon Storage (DACCS)), nuclear power, gas as a

'transition fuel,' green hydrogen, and geoengineering—which dangerously delay genuine climate action.

- **Structural Reform and Global Governance:** Achieving a just transition requires dismantling systemic inequalities in global trade. Global governance must pivot from protecting corporate interests to upholding public and planetary well-being.
- **The Fossil Fuel Treaty:** We invite governments, civil society, and multisectoral groups to actively engage in developing a Fossil Fuel Treaty as an essential legal framework to manage this global transition.
- **Advancing International Cooperation:** We urge strong coalition-building at the upcoming First Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in Santa Marta, Colombia, uniting ambitious governments for an orderly transition.
- **Accelerated Technology Transfer:** We demand the rapid transfer of climate technologies. This requires dismantling restrictive intellectual property (IP) regimes, including relaxing WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (WTO TRIPS) rules, to prevent monopolization of the green transition.
- **Justice in Critical Mineral Supply Chains:** The extraction of critical transition minerals must fundamentally break from historical patterns of exploitation. We demand supply chains that respect Indigenous sovereignty, protect ecosystems, and guarantee that developing countries benefit from the value addition of their own resources.
- **Removal of ISDS Mechanisms:** We call for the immediate termination of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms, ensuring governments can regulate in the public's interest without the threat of corporate lawsuits.

**WE DECLARE THAT** adaptation action must be prioritized, fully funded, and effectively implemented on the ground. We specifically demand:

- **Adaptation-Mitigation Parity:** Enforcing absolute political and strategic parity between adaptation and mitigation efforts.
- **Scaling Adaptation Finance:** Credible pathways must be established to triple adaptation finance by 2035. We demand urgent, substantial 2026 pledges to the Adaptation Fund (AF), the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).
- **Unrestricted Financial Access:** Guaranteeing simplified, direct access to adaptation finance, streamlining all processes, particularly for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to ensure funds reach where they are needed most.
- **Resourcing NAPs:** Closing implementation gaps in National Adaptation Plans by equipping developing nations with the necessary data, technical capacity, and financial coordination to drive community-centered adaptation.
- **Actionable GGA Indicators:** Translating the Global Goal on Adaptation into measurable frameworks with strict accountability to track on-the-ground progress and identify shortfalls.

**WE DECLARE THAT** robust, fully funded mechanisms for loss and damage are urgently required. We demand:

- **Scaling the FRLD:** The Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) must be scaled up to hundreds of billions of dollars annually, with developed countries committing robust provisions for its first replenishment cycle in 2027. This finance must be treated as strictly additional to existing goals.
- **Rapid-Response Funding:** The immediate operationalization of a rapid-response window within the FRLD to provide financial relief following acute climate disasters.
- **Increasing Community Access:** The creation of access modalities that prioritize frontline communities, removing bureaucratic red tape so local organizations can easily access funds.
- **Santiago Network Support:** Full utilization of the Santiago Network to help developing nations integrate Loss & Damage into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), craft localized response plans and develop funding proposals.
- **Elevating L&D as a Core Pillar:** The formal and permanent embedding of Loss and Damage within the Global Stocktake, cementing it as a core pillar of global climate action.

As a Southeast Asia and South Asia community, we commit to continue to coordinate, cooperate, and scale up our efforts at COP31, the First Conference for Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels, and beyond for a just, green and resilient planet.

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