

# **CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORK ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

## **Press Release**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE FUNDING COMMITMENTS: RECENT EUROPEAN UNION ANNOUNCEMENT ON FUNDING FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

The European Union (EU) has recently announced that it would offer Fifteen Billion Euros a year to assist poor countries cope with the effects of climate change. This announcement seeks to comply with the commitments of developed countries under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) ahead of crucial climate talks in Copenhagen, Denmark in December 2009. Under the UNFCCC developed countries are required to support adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries such as Malawi.

The Malawi Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC) wishes to thank the EU for this commitment ahead of the climate change negotiations scheduled for this December. No doubt many other developed countries will make their respective commitments to ensure that the talks will have meaningful impact in addressing the effects of climate change. These impacts are already being manifested by cyclical patterns of droughts and floods, rising sea levels and rising temperature which in general disproportionately affect vulnerable communities in developing countries including Malawi.

It is important to place the EU funding commitment in context. The UNFCCC clearly identifies developed countries as largely responsible for historical emissions of greenhouse gases blamed for climate change. The overall responsibility for global emissions show that the United States (US) is responsible for about 34%; the EU countries are responsible for 24%; while Africa as whole is responsible for about 3% mainly caused by industrial South Africa and some northern Africa states.

In accordance with well recognized international law principles of state responsibility and the polluter pays the EU is obliged to contribute between 16 to 30% while the US must provide between 17 to 30% for financing adaptation to and mitigation of climate change based on responsibilities for emissions and ability to pay. Developed countries have generally reaped great rewards from polluting the atmosphere and must therefore pay for the costs of adapting to and mitigating the impacts of this pollution.

The EU proposal aims to peg developing countries total climate change funding needs at roughly \$145bn a year by 2020 while developing country estimates recommend that developed countries should provide around \$302bn annually within 20 years. In short the EU is committing by far less resources than required and much less than it is responsible for. If this sets a trend as we edge close to Copenhagen talks, it will be

extremely difficult to reach consensus and persuade developing countries such as China, India, Brazil (now big polluters in their own right) to cut emissions under a new regime to be negotiated in Copenhagen. The consequences will spell disaster for climate governance and imperil any chance of stemming global warming which threatens everyone on earth. There are other grave concerns.

The current EU proposal suggests that the EU could use part of the future development aid it has already promised for poor countries as part of its climate change contribution. As one developing country climate negotiator poignantly observed, this sounds like telling a needy school kid whose bicycle you have damaged by your negligence that you would buy him a new bicycle but that the costs of the bicycle would be deducted from his pocket money! This is totally unacceptable and unreasonable, as it will result in resource allocation challenges for our developing country governments and will significantly affect development gains already achieved.

CISONECC therefore calls on the EU and all developed countries preparing their respective contributions to climate funding to ensure that the funding commitments are within the estimated costs of climate change adaptation and mitigation for developing country parties who are unable to cope on their own and who did not contribute to global warming. We also call for a separate climate change-funding stream for developed countries in addition to current development aid commitments.

In light of these concerns we hope the Malawi Government can make a formal statement in response to the EU proposal reflecting the interest of Malawians who are threatened and are suffering the adverse impacts of climate change. CISONECC believes there is still room for further bilateral and inter-party negotiations between the Government of Malawi and other developing countries with the EU before December 2009.

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