

## *Africa Women and Gender Constituency*

### *3rd September Pre-session: Claiming Our Narratives: African Women's Leadership in the context of Climate Change*

#### *Outcomes Declaration and Press Release:*

#### ***African women are here!***

*We, African women and girls, the custodians of the land, nurturers of life, keepers of our communities, and guardian of knowledge, have gathered here today to assert our collective and resolute commitment to safeguard our continent, our countries, our communities, and our planet from the devastating impacts of the climate crisis. We stand here to demonstrate our leadership and claim our rightful place in decision-making processes.*

*We refuse to be confined within colonial boundaries, and we are here to assert and embrace the ideals of Pan-Africanism. We are deeply concerned by the destruction of forests and communities in Congo, just as we are deeply troubled by the appalling state of women and children in 'camps' resulting from extreme weather events in Mozambique, Malawi, Kenya and Nigeria, among others.*

*We invoke our Ubuntu philosophy and remind ourselves and our leaders that the climate crisis and its interconnected crises demand unity and solidarity. We stand together in our diverse identities, representing women from the hills and mountains to those from the savannah and islands, women from farming to pastoral communities, from government to civil society, and academics, encompassing the young, the old and those with differing abilities. We recognize that patriarchal social structures, exploitative economic models, and existing political structures, with their colonial legacies, disproportionately affect us, underscoring the urgent need for every voice to be heard and every struggle to be acknowledged and amplified.*

*We are here to do just that.*

*In this space, on this day, we send a clear and resounding message to our African governments, the African Union, and their allied institutions: African women's voices should NEVER be an afterthought. We refuse to be tokenized, brought in to adorn panels, or utilized to fulfill inclusivity quotas. African women constitute the majority of the people on this continent; therefore, climate debates, discussions, decisions, and actions must be led by us, for us, and with us, not dictated by corporations or so-called developed imperialist partners and their agencies. The systematic exclusion and marginalization of African women's voices and their agenda on their own land by their own institutions is unacceptable.*

*We stand here, organized at the margins of this summit, to demonstrate our concerns and to hold the global North and climate polluters accountable. African women are watching them closely. The only role they should have in this summit is to commit to fulfilling their responsibilities, providing their fair share of grant financing, and refraining from promoting destructive market-based schemes in the name of climate solutions.*

*For those who still doubt the reality or severity of the climate crisis, we are here to share the stories of how it is affecting African women, our societies, our livelihoods, our well-being, and our economies today. It affects our health, our cultures, our heritage, and our traditions. The struggles of young women in small island communities, women small-scale farmers grappling with unpredictable weather patterns, women living with disabilities in the face of climate emergencies, or women residing in urban poor communities are stark testimonies of the impacts, losses, and damages experienced today, on this continent. The voices of these communities must be at the center of the climate summit agenda.*

*Importantly, for those who assume that African women are mere helpless victims waiting to be rescued by white missionaries, we are here to assert and own our complex realities. Yes, we are among the most affected by the climate crisis, and yet, we are also the creators of real, sustainable, and gender-just climate solutions. Today, we amplify these solutions, from our knowledge of maintaining seed systems, biodiversity, and soil nutrients for regenerative urban farming to women-led renewable energy enterprises. and African girls employing modern technologies to raise awareness about the climate crisis and promote recycling. We are equally here to offer well-crafted, evidence-based analyses and framing of the state of the climate crisis in Africa, accompanied by practical and ambitious policy solutions designed to address the climate crisis and its intersecting challenges.*



## OUR DEMANDS:

### **To our African governments:**

1. *Commit to center African women's leadership in climate actions. Africa has the least representation of women in global climate change policy processes. African governments must intentionally support the participation and engagement of women in all aspects of climate policy, from design to implementation and monitoring, and ensure that they are contextually applicable to their experiences and lived realities.*
2. *Stand firm and united in demanding climate finance in the form of grants and public funding, guided by the principles of collective but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), the operationalization of a loss and damage fund to cover economic and non economic losses and damages and a stronger financial commitment during the Global Stocktake and New Collective and Quantified Goal (NCQG).*
3. *Reject false solutions on our land that are designed to create private profit and legitimize the lack of ambition in cutting emissions by the global north. Net zero is not real zero, and carbon markets and geoengineering are false solutions that harm our land and people.*
4. *Commit to deliver on the 2003 Maputo Declaration to domestically finance the agriculture sector by allocating at least 10% of African countries' national budgets. Africa's food and nutrition security can only be achieved through gender just and Pan-African policies and solutions that protect indigenous farmers and traditional farming systems from the commoditization, the effects of climate change and capture by multinational corporations promulgating industrial agriculture.*
5. *Actively and systematically engage African citizens and communities in climate change awareness programs and climate actions to ensure community ownership of climate actions, especially in adaptation, just transition, and disaster risk reduction efforts.*

## OUR DEMANDS:

### **To global North polluters:**

#### *To the Global North and Polluters:*

- 1. Cut your emissions by phasing out fossil fuels NOW.*
- 2. Provide your fair share of grant and public financing, NOT loans and private market-based financing.*
- 3. Step back from the colonial era mindset. Multilateral spaces must embrace the ideals of collective leadership and end the overt and covert dominance of the global north. African governments and other global south governments have the right to equal decision making power in the multilateral process.*

*We, African women, commit to stand in our power to free ourselves and our communities from the exploitation of existing economic and social systems that have contributed to the crises we are currently fighting. Let our voices be heard, and let our actions be a beacon of hope for a sustainable and just future for all.*

*African Women are here!*

*#AfricaWGC*

*#AfricaFeministACS*

*#FeministClimateJustice*