

**NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**With Policy Makers and Public Actors**  
Delhi | 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009

**PEOPLES DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE 2009**

We, the members of people's organisations, NGOs and other civil society organisations, in a National Consultation with Members of Parliament, Leaders of Political Parties, representatives from Embassies, High Commissions and Bilateral Funding agencies, meeting in Delhi on this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of November 2009,

**Gravely concerned** that climate change poses the most serious threat to the survival of the vulnerable people along with people with similar organic dependence on nature's cycles and resources including farmers, fisher-folk, pastorals, laborers, artisans, women, children etc, in many countries and, that it accentuates the sufferings from other crises that have arisen out of the upper class consumption in a large scale, and at the cost of basic goods for the poor;

**Believe** this is not only a crisis of CO<sub>2</sub> emission, but the economic and political issues of inequality, both within and between nations, impacting distribution and consumption are at the core of the crisis of global warming and climate change; and that the crisis is basically about a few usurping the rights and access of the vast majority of the disempowered over the commons – air, water, land, minerals and forests;

**Consider** that the unsustainable economic development and inequitable and unlimited growth based on an economy dependent on the use of fossil-fuels and extractive industries, which intensified in the last 60 years, have led to the sharp rise in carbon emissions, way beyond what the Earth can absorb

**Greatly disturbed** that despite the mitigation commitments made by Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol, especially those of the developed countries, global emissions continue to increase, leading to rapidly accelerating impacts, accompanied by costs and burdens that are beyond the ability of many, especially the vulnerable countries, to control;

**Realize** that the window of time to act and rectify through concerted and collective actions, do not extend beyond a couple of decades at the outer limit.

**Assert** that there is an extremely urgent need to make sharp, binding and immediate cuts in the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) – primarily by the historical large polluters (Annex 1 countries), but also – in a phased manner – by emerging large polluters nationally, like China, India, Brazil, South Africa etc, while providing more energy & resources to their poor.

**Profoundly disappointed** by the lack of urgency reflected in the ongoing negotiations leading up to Copenhagen, neither in the Indian government's position and policy interventions (primarily in the shape of the National Action Plan on Climate Change), nor in the positions of governments worldwide.

**Now therefore**, we, on behalf of the billion-strong deprived and under-consuming people of India, call upon our democratically elected government, to undertake the following principles in the international climate change negotiations in COP15, Copenhagen (and beyond, as it now seem likely):

1. We reaffirm the principles enshrined in the Rio Declaration and the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities having regard to national circumstances, and, the precautionary principle.
2. India must stand firmly for any position that calls for legally binding emission cuts by the historical large polluting (Annex.1) countries, as is done in the Kyoto Protocol. We note with great alarm, the recent attempts of many large developed countries – to bypass any legally binding international treaty and enter into a regime of 'voluntary', 'national legislation-driven', 'bi-lateral agreement based' emission cuts.
3. Our Government must stand united with other developing countries, G77, and more specifically, the most threatened people and nations – the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Small Island States (AOSIS).

4. COP 15 negotiations are likely to develop a framework to sustain global efforts to contain climate change beyond 2012. It is likely to have a timeline for longer period say 2050. Therefore our government along with other developing countries must ensure that agriculture gets due importance in climate change negotiations. Agriculture feeds world and supports livelihood of more than one-third of world's population.
5. We must support the proposal of full climate/ecological debt payment – as a legally binding obligation – by the Annex 1 countries, to the historical under-consuming countries, like ours and the other poor nations. This Debt must include, as proposed – both the historical emission debt, because the rich nations have forcibly occupied our emission/development space, and the adaptation debt as the poor nations and communities are bearing and will have to bear a larger share of the climate impacts, without having the wherewithal to cope with these new crises;
6. The Indian Government must bring into its climate negotiating position, the enormous amounts of strife and hardship already faced by its poor, and amend its position from that articulated and demanded by its ruling elite;
7. Any market driven false solution(s), like CDMs, Offsets, REDD etc, are shown to be causing more damage than good, particularly for the disadvantaged in India & elsewhere, and the govt. must firm-up its negotiating position in rejecting these market measures as climate solutions
8. We must firmly insist on Mitigation First, demanding quick, large, binding and verifiable cuts in GHG emissions from the developed countries with legal recourse for failure to do so, and provisions for properly empowered monitoring mechanisms
9. Based on the latest scientific research, India must revise downward, its own calculations of maximum possible atmospheric carbon, and demand suitably larger cuts from the high-emitters – historic and present. The consistent and long-standing demand of 40% GHG emission cuts by the high-polluting Annex-1 countries, from their 1990 emission levels, should not only be strengthened, but improved upon, if we are to save the earth's life support systems as we know these. The longer term goal of over 80% emission cuts by Annex-1 countries by 2050, must also be strongly pursued – supported by emission capping and reducing trajectories by large developing countries, like India, China, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa etc.
10. We must firmly move away from the false hopes of destructive technology driven energy 'solutions', like so-called clean coal, nuclear (fission), large-scale agro-fuel plantations etc. with the understanding that these only dis-empowers and pauperize the already marginalized people in our countries.
11. Considering that many of the adverse impacts are now unavoidable, for decades to come, in spite of any mitigating actions by the world community, our government must seriously prepare for adaptive responses keeping vulnerable communities in focus and this should be in addition to the existing expenditure in the social sector. It shall be considered as an 'adaptation' programme.
12. India must take an ethical leadership in the struggle for climate justice and equity and declare that –  

“we will provide all our citizens with energy and life-sustaining support for all their needs for dignified lives, BUT we will never exceed the per capita emission, which is our fair share from the global common atmosphere and is dictated by Mother Earth herself, by the capacity of its carbon (and other) cycle(s) to handle safely, without threatening the earth itself, while ensuring that all other living beings on this earth – human and otherwise – get their fair share too”.
13. The Indian Government, in keeping with the ideals of this great country, must take an ethical and dynamic leadership, and bring back the questions of **Justice and Equity** in all their dimensions, transcending barriers of nations, generations and species into the centre-stage of Climate Change Negotiations.