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Joint CSO Statement for EU-Africa Summit towards a Green and Equitable EU-Africa Partnership

CSOs working on climate demand putting the spotlight on people- and development-centered climate and energy goals ahead of the EU-AU Summit

On 17–18 February 2022 the African (AU) and European Unions (EU) are expected to hold the 6th Summit in Brussels, under French (EU Council) and Senegalese (AU) presidencies. The summit is a crucial moment to rebuild trust, to establish a more balanced, collaborative, and equal partnership between Africa and the EU, and to move from words to action. For the EU-AU partnership to achieve transformational results for all, **EU and AU leaders must commit to a development-centered, rights-based approach, promoting and demanding success in good governance, ensuring gender mainstreaming, and guaranteeing early, comprehensive, and meaningful engagement of CSOs, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and Local Communities in the governance and implementation of the partnership.** Unfortunately, consultation has been minimal, and EU and African leaders have been silent on the matter of ensuring the active participation of civil society as part of the implementation of the partnership itself. We therefore urge EU and AU leaders to follow up on the Joint Communiqué from the EU-AU Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting in Kigali by agreeing to establish institutional and operational structures and mechanisms for meaningful civil society participation in policy processes. This should include concrete proposals on information-sharing, consultation, transparency, and dialogue.

2022 could be a transformative moment for Africa and the EU to advance a people- and development-centered approach to climate and energy, and cooperate for success at COP27.

From the AU, this requires the clear assertion of priorities that are linked to Africa's sustainable development goals. Africa's situation deserves extraordinary attention as it contributes just 4 percent of global total greenhouse gas emissions (with more than 17 percent of the world's population), yet its development is threatened by the climate crisis, and facing huge adaptation challenges and increasing losses and damages. **African governments should pursue a development-centered approach to climate and energy goals, which respects African-ownership and community and civil society participation.** The African continent has expertise in adaptation and climate innovations, abundant renewable energy (RE) potential, and a young and growing population that is seeking jobs, as well as high quality goods and raw materials. This provides great opportunities for driving a broad socio-economic evolution towards a green economy with an African-based sustainable and resilient value chain.

From the EU, this requires a more cooperative and consultative approach to the Green Deal. It is important that the new partnership between Europe and Africa is grounded in both continents' shared objectives and values, and builds beyond Glasgow Climate Pact outcomes and strengthens cooperation towards the 'African' COP27. **This requires the EU to strengthen and scale-up its focus on adaptation and addressing loss & damage, as well as mitigation, through new initiatives and strategies including the Global Gateway.** It is not sufficient for the EU to simply align its objectives with the African agenda. To stay true to its democratic and human rights values, the EU must vigilantly ensure that the priorities of the new partnership between Africa and Europe ultimately benefits the African people, who have so often been left behind. The EU should, therefore, listen and demonstrate willingness to learn from Africa's efforts.

Ahead of the EU-AU summit, we put forward the following **key priorities and recommendations** for cooperation between Africa and Europe:

1. Supporting the just and inclusive energy transition: renewables, energy efficiency, and climate innovation critical for clean development and recovery

As a sector that is critical to socio-economic development, tackling gender inequalities, health challenges and recovery, the cooperation between Europe and Africa should focus on **(1) ending energy poverty, creating universal (decentralized) energy access, including to clean cooking, (2) accelerating RE deployment, (3) powering key industries and sectors for Africa's socio-economic transformation, and (4) maximizing energy efficiency.**

This entails promoting multiple kinds of RE technologies to support leapfrogging of inefficient and fossil fuel energy based sources to support energy access, in particular solar; wind; geothermal; and marine. It should also promote the full range of renewable electricity applications, from grid-connected to mini-grids to small stand-alone systems, as well as other forms of energy. **Particular consideration should be paid to applications that meet the needs of the African people and household needs, including supporting universal access to clean cooking.** Meeting the urgent needs for overcoming energy poverty, clean cooking solutions, and affordable and universal access to electricity does not require any expansion in fossil gas production. However, there are still some circumstances where it may be necessary for people in African countries, who face energy poverty and indoor pollution caused by traditional but inefficient biomass-based cooking, to transition to gas cooking.

Further, developing climate innovation technologies such as 100% renewable hydrogen and derivatives can bring intersecting benefits for African countries' sustainable socio-economic development and provide leapfrogging opportunities, if guided by comprehensive policies, strict social and environmental safeguards, and implemented as one part of a greater strategy for Africa's green and inclusive transition. When developing climate innovation technologies, special care needs to be taken to ensure that African countries benefit from the full or at least an attractive part of the value chain of their transformed, renewable-based economy and are not merely restricted to being raw material providers.¹ To address this, **the EU-Africa partnership should promote technology transfer, economic progress, and job creation opportunities and minimize ecological and social challenges.** Such pursuit, in turn, requires capacity and skills training to ensure that people are qualified to fulfill labor market requirements to access these jobs. **Any efforts pursued should align with existing visions and frameworks of Africa-owned initiatives** (e.g. Least Developed Countries Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Initiative, Desert to Power, etc.).

2. Deepening adaptation and loss & damage cooperation to build resilience

Our average 1.1°C warmer world - with significantly higher increases in many parts of Africa - already presents huge adaptation and loss & damage challenges to Africa. While the Glasgow Climate Pact and its Glasgow - Sharm el Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation provide opportunities for progress, the outcomes in terms of loss & damage finance are inadequate. The EU-AU summit offers opportunities to strengthen alliances on adaptation and loss & damage, with a view to 'the African COP27' in 2022.

¹ To exploit the full potential in the EU and to avoid displacing a greener grid from developing countries to Europe, the EU should avoid renewable hydrogen imports, since [CAN Europe's Paris Agreement Compatible energy scenario](#) shows EU energy systems can be based on domestic deployment of renewables and renewable hydrogen within the EU. African countries should in turn explore under which conditions 100 % renewable hydrogen could support their development towards electrified, green economies.

On adaptation, **Africa can share innovations, locally-led, and nature-based approaches to inform the EU's adaptation strategy.** In turn the EU should ensure that **adaptation support and finance to Africa substantially increases in the budget of the EU and in its member states in the budget period 2021-27 to deliver on the Glasgow Climate Pact,** with substantial increases in grant-based funding to sectors underpinning adaptation in LICs and LMICs, such as water, sanitation and hygiene, agroecology, approaches which protect and restore nature, and following the Principles for Locally Led Adaptation. Both should ensure improvements to adaptation and disaster risk reduction mainstreaming, including Global Gateway, aligning and supporting countries' climate plans and National Adaptation Plans. The EU should also provide greater support to African-owned and led initiatives from local, regional to intercontinental level, including the African Adaptation Initiative.

On loss & damage, the EU-AU summit offers an opportunity to discuss current solutions for managing climate risks and impacts, identify gaps and scaling up opportunities. The discussion should result in the **formulation of needs in order to improve existing solutions and close gaps along with concrete suggestions on how additional institutional arrangements for loss & damage financing, to be decided at the Africa-hosted COP 27, could look like.** The EU-AU summit should also **identify a way forward for the loss and damage finance discussion at the G7 and G20 summit and the Petersberg Climate Dialogue.** Further, the EU and AU should cooperate to fill existing gaps, including assisting countries to cope with non-economic loss & damage, helping countries cope with slow-onset impacts of climate change, and building linkages between insurance systems and social safety nets.

3. Increasing climate finance

African countries need reliable financing options to be able to invest upfront to maximize return on investment. **The EU should ensure that all member states take further action to meet its Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments of providing at least 0.7% of GNI, that it provides new and additional climate finance, supporting the full delivery of the collective goal of an annual average of \$100 billion climate finance for developing countries over 2020-25, equating to at least \$600 billion over six years, and achieving 50% of the goal in adaptation finance at the latest by 2025.** Moreover since current pledges fall far short of what is needed, the EU should scale up its contribution, using the Global Europe Instrument's cushion of unallocated funds, and new sources of revenue from carbon pricing and other sources. This should include a portion of revenues from the Emissions Trading System and other mechanisms in the 'Fit for 55' package. All climate financing should be gender responsive. The EU should help to ensure that a new financing target is worked out by 2024 that is based on clear definitions and on the actual needs of the countries (including adaptation, mitigation and loss & damage finance, grants over loans, etc). As countries' climate finance needs remain widely unknown, the EU should provide financial and technical means to African countries to support them in identifying their actual climate finance needs prior to 2024.

In a time of constrained resources and climate crisis, there is no place for public financing for fossil fuels. **On the basis of climate justice and capacity to transition, the EU, African countries, and financial institutions should work out ways to accelerate phasing out all fossil fuel finance, including through direct foreign investment, official development assistance, support from bi- and multilateral development banks, and export credits. This must be accompanied by cooperation on just transition out of fossil fuels for workers and affected communities.** The recently announced partnership between the governments of South Africa, the US, the UK, France, Germany and the EU is a step in the right direction, if good governance principles such as transparency about the scope and conditions, and accountability by lenders, beneficiaries and the South African government are upheld and funding for such just energy

transition partnerships is additional. The EU and AU can benefit from mutual learning and development of successful partnership models incorporating infrastructure finance, technology transfer, technical assistance and education and training. Just transition planning should be aligned to NDCs, target 100% renewable systems, involve workers, communities, trade unions, policy makers, experts and academia, NGOs, businesses and investors in planning, and include just transition funds for workers, small, medium, and micro-enterprises, and communities.

There should be support for the development of financial environments and policy frameworks that provide sustainable investment, with a special focus on small-scale actors. Accessibility of funding and capacity to pay for RE technologies remains a major challenge for the majority of communities and small enterprises in Africa. The structure of financing must therefore be improved, with greater attention paid to the **development of direct financial access opportunities to small- and medium-sized RE projects through adequate and appropriate financing and risk-taking instruments**. Blended finance and guarantees should be used with caution especially in least developed countries, with stronger safeguards against debt distress, and improved access for SMEs and micro-level actors, women's organizations which might be taking on high-risk, innovative, decentralized RE projects or other green enterprises. **The European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) should substantially overshoot the 30% climate target and 35% aspiration stated by the European Commission, towards 40% and focus on unlocking investments in energy access, clean transport, and supporting agroecology, with stronger environmental and human rights safeguards, and complaint mechanisms.**

4. Improving cooperation around climate and biodiversity goals to support recovery

Solving the three key challenges – climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and COVID-19 recovery – requires an integrated approach that builds on interconnectedness, inclusivity and partnership. The United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda acknowledges this interdependency and encourages actions that promote synergies. Yet, there is little evidence that this is happening in practice and many goals, particularly SDG 13, 14 and 15 are unlikely to be met by 2030. This is a direct result of treating these challenges separately when in fact they are deeply interwoven and share many of the same drivers. **Efforts should, therefore, be aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement, the goals of the post-2020 Convention on Biological Diversity framework, Agenda 2030, and should be gender responsive.** This should include 'do no harm' principles with clear exclusion of fossil fuels and environmental harm, those which infringe human rights and land rights. The most resilient recovery is also bottom up. Indigenous peoples, civil society and communities should be engaged in recovery efforts, including through Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships.

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