

October 24, 2022

Dear Special Envoy for Climate Change Kerry,

We are writing on behalf of the millions of members and supporters of our environmental, climate justice, women's, youth, Indigenous, labor, faith-based, development, science, health and foreign policy organizations to urge the Biden administration to commit to meaningful advances in addressing climate-related Loss and Damage, including an agreement to establish a Finance Facility under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), at COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh this November.

As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) AR6 Working Group II report on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability points out, the climate crisis is rapidly worsening and we are already living in an era of losses and damages. Just this year, climate-driven extreme events including terrible floods in Pakistan; persistent drought in the Horn of Africa, intense heat waves in parts of Asia, Africa, South America, the United States, Australia and Europe; and severe wildfires in Europe, Russia and North America have taken a deadly and costly toll. Slow-onset climate disasters like sea level rise, desertification, and threats to food and water supplies are also exerting a significant impact already and will get worse. In addition to economic losses, climate change is also leading to loss of cultural heritage, ways of life, biodiversity and other profound non-economic losses. The most extreme of these impacts are already beyond the ability of frontline nations and communities to respond to through ordinary adaptation measures. Low-income countries and marginalized communities are bearing a disproportionate burden of the resulting losses and damages, and will continue to do so.

The responsibility and obligation of richer nations like the United States is clear, as they have caused the majority of the heat-trapping emissions to date that are driving these climate extremes. The United States in particular is responsible for nearly a quarter of cumulative carbon dioxide emissions since the Industrial Revolution began, by far the largest share of any individual nation. Yet the U.S.'s negotiating posture on Loss and Damage has been recalcitrant, creating a major obstacle to meeting the urgent needs of climate vulnerable countries and causing great harm to our nation's reputation on the world stage, including most recently at COP26 in Glasgow last November and at the climate conference in Bonn this June.

The 2015 Paris Agreement reaffirmed the mandate of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage created in 2013; yet all these years later there has been no progress on securing meaningful action on providing finance for this critical issue. Meanwhile, low-income climate-vulnerable countries have been forced to deal with an onslaught of rapidly worsening climate extremes. Development assistance and episodic humanitarian aid in response to disasters are no substitute for the robust, predictable, and ongoing streams of needs-based funding that are necessary to protect people, ecosystems and livelihoods against disasters before they occur. Private or philanthropic funding is also not a substitute for public sources of funding. Adaptation funding is also not adequate to address the kinds of climate extremes that are beyond the limits of ordinary adaptive measures.

It is in this context that we urge the Biden administration to stop blocking progress on negotiations on Loss and Damage within the UNFCCC process and to work constructively to advance an agreement to establish a Finance Facility under the UNFCCC specifically to address Loss and Damage at COP27. At COP26, countries agreed to the establishment of the Glasgow Dialogue, a compromise outcome reached after proposals from developing countries for a Loss and Damage Facility were blocked by richer, polluting nations including the United States. It is now time to move beyond talk to action. We simply cannot afford any more years of failure and delay as people lose their lives, homes and livelihoods or face devastating food and water shortages as a result of a problem they had little part in causing.

The United States should also work within the UNFCCC and other international bodies to advance a human rights-centered framework to protect those who are forcibly displaced by climate change. These priorities are complementary to, and as critical as, other actions the United States must take to live up to its global commitments, including sharp cuts in its heat-trapping emissions in line with science and equity considerations, and contributing its fair share of climate finance and other global cooperation measures to promote mitigation and adaptation.

The success of COP27 depends crucially on richer, polluting nations like the United States ramping up their climate finance contributions and demonstrating a clear willingness and solidarity to address Loss and Damage in a meaningful way. People on the frontlines of the climate crisis around the world—especially those who are marginalized and live in poverty—deserve no less.

Sincerely,

1. ActionAid USA
2. Corporate Accountability
3. Friends of the Earth U.S.
4. Oxfam America
5. Sierra Club
6. Taproot Earth
7. Union of Concerned Scientists
8. Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)
9. 10 Votes
10. 198 methods
11. 350 Bay Area Action
12. 350 Hawaii
13. 350 Kishwaukee
14. 350 Pittsburgh
15. 350 Triangle
16. 350 US
17. 7 Directions of Service
18. About Face: Veterans Against the War
19. Accelerate Neighborhood Climate Action
20. Action for the Climate Emergency

21. AFGE Local 704
22. Alabama Interfaith Power & Light
23. Alliance for Affordable Energy
24. Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
25. Amazon Watch
26. American Friends Service Committee
27. American Jewish World Service
28. Anthropocene Alliance
29. Bergen County Green Party
30. Brighter Green
31. Bronx Climate Justice North
32. Businesses for a Livable Climate
33. Call to Action Colorado
34. Care About Climate
35. CatholicNetwork US
36. Center for Biological Diversity
37. Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
38. Change the Chamber \* Lobby for Climate
39. Citizen's Alliance for a Sustainable Englewood
40. Clean Energy Action
41. Climate First!
42. Climate Generation
43. Climate Hawks Vote
44. Climate Law & Policy Project
45. Colorado Businesses for a Livable Climate
46. Common Ground Rising
47. Community for Sustainable Energy
48. Concerned Health Professionals of Pennsylvania
49. Divest Oregon: Reinvest in a Fossil Free Future
50. E3G
51. Earth Uprising International
52. EarthRights International
53. EcoEquity
54. Education, Economics, Environmental, Climate and Health Organization (EEEECHO)
55. Empower Our Future
56. Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay Area
57. Extinction Rebellion US
58. Food & Water Watch
59. Franciscan Action Network
60. FreshWater Accountability Project
61. Fridays for Future U.S.
62. Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
63. Global Witness
64. Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance
65. Greater-Birmingham Alliance to Stop Pollution (GASP)
66. Green House Collaboration Center

67. GreenFaith
68. GreenLatinos
69. Greenpeace USA
70. Health Care Without Harm
71. Idle No More SF Bay
72. Indivisible Ambassadors
73. Institute for Policy Studies Climate Policy Program
74. Interfaith Oceans
75. Interstate 70 Citizens Advisory Group
76. Justice Is Global
77. Larimer Alliance for Health, Safety & Environment
78. Littleton Business Alliance
79. Long Island Progressive Coalition
80. MADRE
81. Mayfair Park Neighborhood Association Board
82. Media Alliance
83. Mental Health & Inclusion Ministries
84. Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light
85. Montbello Neighborhood Improvement Association
86. MoveOn.org Hoboken
87. NC Climate Justice Collective
88. NC Council of Churches
89. NC Interfaith Power & Light
90. Newark Water Coalition
91. North Bronx Racial Justice
92. North Range Concerned Citizens
93. Nuclear Information and Resource Service
94. Occupy Bergen County (New Jersey)
95. Oil Change International
96. Organizing Uplifting Resources and Strategies
97. People's Justice Council
98. Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania
99. Plastic Pollution Coalition
100. Presbytery of Charlotte
101. Presente.org
102. Project Amiga
103. Public Citizen
104. Putting Down Roots
105. Quaker Earthcare Witness
106. Rachel Carson Council
107. RapidShift Network
108. Resist the Pipeline
109. San Bernardino Free Them All
110. Save the Environmental Protection Agency
111. Seeding Sovereignty
112. Seneca Lake Guardian

113. Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
114. Small Business Alliance
115. SOMA Action
116. Southwest Organization for Sustainability
117. Spirit of the Sun
118. Sunrise Movement
119. Sustaining Way
120. System Change Not Climate Change
121. Terra Advocati
122. Texas Impact
123. The Farmworker Association of Florida
124. The Imani Group
125. The Last Plastic Straw
126. The Quantum Institute
127. The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
128. Third Act Virginia
129. Thomas Berry Forum at Iona University
130. Turtle Island Restoration Network
131. Unite North Metro Denver
132. United Women in Faith
133. US Climate Action Network (USCAN)
134. Virginia Interfaith Power & Light
135. VIVAT International
136. Vote Climate
137. Wall of Women
138. Waterway Advocates
139. Western Slope Businesses for a Livable Climate
140. Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN)
141. Womxn from the Mountain
142. Working for Racial Equity
143. Zero Hour