

Call for “system change not climate change” unites global movement

Corrupt Copenhagen ‘accord’ exposes gulf between peoples demands and elite interests

The highly anticipated UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen ended with a fraudulent agreement, engineered by the United States and dropped into the conference at the last moment. The "agreement" was not adopted. Instead, it was "noted" in an absurd parliamentary invention designed to accommodate the United States and permit Ban Ki-moon to utter the ridiculous pronouncement "We have a deal."

The UN conference was unable to deliver solutions to the climate crisis, or even minimal progress toward them. Instead, the talks were a complete betrayal of impoverished nations and island states, producing embarrassment for the United Nations and the Danish government. In a conference designed to limit greenhouse gas emissions there was very little talk of emission reductions. Rich, developed countries continued to delay any talk of deep and binding cuts, instead shifting the burden to less developed countries and showing no willingness to make reparations for the damage they have caused.

The *Climate Justice Now!* coalition, alongside other networks, was united here at COP15 in the call for System Change, Not Climate Change. In contrast, the Copenhagen climate conference itself demonstrated that real solutions, as opposed to false, market-based solutions, will not be adopted until we overcome the existing unjust political and economic system.

Government and corporate elites here in Copenhagen made no attempt to satisfy the expectations of the world. False solutions and corporations completely co-opted the United Nations process. The global elite would like to privatize the atmosphere through carbon markets; carve up the remaining forests, bush and grasslands of the world through the violation of Indigenous Peoples' rights and land-grabbing; promote high-risk technologies to restructure the climate; convert real forests into monoculture tree plantations and agricultural soils into carbon sinks; and complete the enclosure and privatisation of the commons. Virtually every proposal discussed in Copenhagen was based on a desire to create opportunities for profit rather than to reduce emissions, and even the small amounts of financing promised could end up paying for the transfer of risky technologies.

The only discussions of real solutions in Copenhagen took place in social movements. Climate Justice Now!, Climate Justice Action and Klimaforum09 articulated many creative ideas and attempted to deliver those ideas to the UN Climate Change Conference through the Klimaforum09 People's Declaration and the Reclaim Power People's Assembly. Among nations, the ALBA countries, many African nations and AOSIS often echoed the messages of the climate justice movement, speaking of the need to repay climate debt, create mitigation and adaptation funds outside of neoliberal institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, and keep global temperature increase below 1.5 degrees.

The UN and the Danish government served the interests of the rich, industrialized countries, excluding our voices and the voices of the least powerful throughout the world, and attempting to silence our demands to talk about real solutions. Nevertheless, our voices grew stronger and more united day by day during the two-week conference. As we grew stronger, the mechanisms implemented by the UN and the Danish authorities for the participation of civil society grew more dysfunctional, repressive and undemocratic, very much like the WTO and Davos.

Social movement participation was limited throughout the conference, drastically curtailed in week two, and

several civil society organizations even had their admission credentials revoked midway through the second week. At the same time, corporations continued lobbying inside the Bella Center.

Outside the conference, the Danish police extended the repressive framework, launching a massive clampdown on the right to free expression and arresting and beating thousands, including civil society delegates to the climate conference. Our movement overcame this repression to raise our voices in protest over and over again. Our demonstrations, organised together with Danish trade unions, movements and NGOs, mobilized more than 100,000 people in Denmark to press for climate justice, while social movements around the world mobilized hundreds of thousands more in local climate justice demonstrations. In spite of repression by the Danish government and exclusion by the United Nations, the movement for system change not climate change is now stronger than when we arrived in Denmark.

While Copenhagen has been a disaster for just and equitable climate solutions, it has been an inspiring watershed moment in the battle for climate justice. The governments of the elite have no solutions to offer, but the climate justice movement has provided strong vision and clear alternatives. Copenhagen will be remembered as an historic event for global social movements. It will be remembered, along with Seattle and Cancun, as a critical moment when the diverse agendas of many social movements coalesced and became stronger, asking in one voice for system change, not climate change.

The Climate Justice Now! coalition calls for social movements around the world to mobilize in support of climate justice.

We will take our struggle forward not just in climate talks, but on the ground and in the streets, to promote genuine solutions that include:

- leaving fossil fuels in the ground and investing instead in appropriate energy-efficiency and safe, clean and community-led renewable energy
- radically reducing wasteful consumption, first and foremost in the North, but also by Southern elites
- huge financial transfers from North to South, based on reparations for climate debts and subject to democratic control. The costs of adaptation and mitigation should be paid for by redirecting military budgets, progressive and innovative taxes, and debt cancellation
- rights-based resource conservation that enforces Indigenous land rights and promotes peoples' sovereignty over energy, forests, land and water
- sustainable family farming and fishing, and peoples' food sovereignty.

We are committed to building a diverse movement – locally and globally – for a better world.

Climate Justice Now!

Copenhagen

19 December 2009

www.climate-justice-now.org

and supported by the following organisations and individuals, as of 23 January 2010

Organisations

Afrika Kontakt, Denmark

Aitec-IPAM, France

Alianza Mexicana por la Autodeterminación de los Pueblos-AMAP, Mexico

Alternatives International

Anti Debt Coalition (KAU), Indonesia

Asamblea de Huehuetenango por la defensa de los recursos naturales, Guatemala

Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development/Jubilee South

Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN)

ATTAC Germany Working Group on Energy, Climate and Environment, Germany

Attac Malmö, Sweden

ATTAC, France

ATTAC, Germany

ATTAC, Japan

ATTAC, Switzerland
Balochistan Climate Change Alliance, Pakistan.
Belarusian Social Forum, Belarus
Camp for Climate Action, UK
Campaign Against Climate Change (CCC) Trade Union Group, UK
Carbon Trade Watch
Centre for Civil Society Environmental Justice Project, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa
Centre for Environmental Justice, Sri Lanka
Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI), Nicaragua
Climat et justice sociale, Belgium
Climate-change-trade-union-network, UK
Committee for the Abolition of Third World Debt (CADTM)
Confederazione dei Comitati di Base (COBAS), Italy
Consejo de los pueblos del occidente de Guatemala por la defensa del territorio, Guatemala
Convergencia de Movimientos de los Pueblos de las Américas (COMPA)
Corner House, UK
Corporate Europe Observatory
DICE Foundation, India
Down To Earth, Indonesia/UK
Energy and Climate Policy Institute (ECPI), Korea
Enhedslisten/the Red-Green Alliance, Denmark
Escuela de Pensamiento Ecologista, Guatemala
ESK Sindikatua, Basque Country
Euromarches/Marches européennes
Europe solidaire sans frontières (ESSF), France
Fair, Italy
Family Farm Defenders, USA
FeS-Klima AG (Für eine linke Strömung), Germany
FERN
FOCO Foro Ciudadano de Participación por la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos, Argentina
Focus on the Global South, Thailand, Philippines and India
Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy, USA
Friends of the Earth International
Friends of the Earth Sydney Collective, Australia
Friends of the Earth, Flanders & Brussels, Belgium
Friends of the Earth, Sweden
Galiza Non Se Vende
gegenstromberlin, Germany
Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)
Global Exchange, USA
Global Forest Coalition and Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia
Global Justice Ecology Project, USA
Greater Boston United for Justice with Peace (UJP), USA
Hacktivist News Service, hns-info.net
Hemispheric Social Alliance, the Americas
HOPE, Pakistan
Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF), India
Indonesia Fisherfolk Union/ Serikat Nelayan Indonesia (SNI), Indonesia
Institute for Social Ecology, USA
Internationale Socialister, Denmark
Jubilee South - International
Jubilee South - Asia/Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (JSAPMDD)
Klimabevægelsen (Climate Movement), Denmark
KlimaX, Denmark
La Via Campesina
Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre, Nigeria
Les Amis de la Terre, France
Linksjugend[*'solid*], Germany

Living Seas, Denmark
Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities, USA
Massachusetts Forest Watch, USA
Mémoire des luttes, France
Movement Generation: Justice and Ecology Project, USA
Movimiento Mexicano de Afectados por las Represas (MAPDER), Mexico
National Fishers Solidarity Movement, Sri Lanka
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR), USA
Otros Mindos Chiapas, Mexico
Pacific Indigenous Peoples Environment Coalition
Peoples Movement on Climate Change (PMCC)
Plymouth Trades Union Council, UK
Polaris Institute, Canada
projecto270, Portugal
Red Mexicana de Acción frente al Libre Comercio (RMALC), Mexico
Red Mexicana de Afectados por la Minería (REMA), Mexico
REDES/Friends of the Earth, Uruguay
Renewable Energy Centre (REC), South Africa
Rising Tide North America
SmartMeme, USA
Socialist Workers Party, Britain
Steering Committee of Green Left, UK
Sustainable Energy & Economy Network, Institute for Policy Studies, USA
Texas Climate Emergency Campaign, USA
Thai Working Group for Climate Justice, Thailand
The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination, UK
The Latin American Network against Monoculture Tree Plantations (RECOMA)/Red Latinoamericana contra los Monocultivos de Arboles (RECOMA)
The Respect Party, UK
Timberwatch Coalition, South Africa
Transnational Institute (TNI)
Union de Comunidades Indigenas de la Zona Norte del Istmo-UCIZONI, Mexico
United for Justice and Peace, Greater Boston, USA
Urgence Climat 13, France
Utopia, France
VOICE, Bangladesh
Walhi, Friends of the Earth, Indonesia
World Development Movement, UK
Zukunftskonvent, Germany

Individuals

Alex Callinicos, Professor of European Studies, Kings College London, UK
Beth Adams, Massachusetts, USA
Chris Baugh, Assistant General Secretary, Public and Commercial Services union, Britain
Clive Searle, National Secretary, The Respect Party, UK
Corinna Genschel, Committee of Basic Rights and Democracy, Germany
Dave Bleakney, national union representative, Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Canada
David Hallows, Durban, South Africa
Dr Isabelle Fremeaux, Birkbeck College, UK
Elana Bulman, UK
Francine Mestrum, Global Social Justice, Belgium
Graham Petersen, National Environment Officer, University and College Union, UK
Inger V. Johansen, Enhedslisten/the Red-Green Alliance, Denmark
Jessica Bell, People for Climate Justice, Canada
John Jordan, UK
Jonathan Neale, UK
Jurgen Kraus, coordination of the caravan from WTO to COP15
Kirsten Gamst-Nielsen, Denmark

Laura Grainger, Young Friends of the Earth

Marie-France Astegiani-Merrain, vice/Présidente d'ADEN, France

Matthew Firth, staff representative, environmental issues, Canadian Union of Public Employees.

MK Dorsey, Dartmouth University, USA

Nicola Bullard, Australia

Patrick Bond, University of KwaZulu Natal

Pete Sirois, Maine, USA

Professor Andrew Dobson, Keele University, UK

Rebecca Sommer, Representative of the NGO Society for Threatened Peoples International, in consultative status to the United Nations ECOSOC and in participatory status with the Council of Europe. Indigenous Peoples Department, USA

Richard Greeman (socialist scholar)

Roger Leisner, Radio Free Maine, USA

Ruth Reitan, University of Miami, USA

Tony Staunton, UK