



Mercy International Association: Global Action Statement on United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21), Paris, December 2015

Pope Francis states in *Laudato Si'* (23) that “climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all.” Addressing climate change is the greatest moral imperative of our time. Climate justice must be realized.

To halt global warming and mitigate the negative impact of climate change on the future sustainability of this planet and on the entire community of life, governments must acknowledge and address the root causes and systems underpinning climate change. Market-based remedies that promote false solutions to climate change, including the commodification of nature, must give way to sustainable and just solutions for both peoples and Earth.

Clearly, the most impoverished and marginalized persons are disproportionately bearing the impacts of climate change as evidenced in food deprivation; lack of water, sanitation and energy; poor health and failed livelihood. These grim realities violate the most basic human rights and dignity of the marginalized. They strip vulnerable communities of development opportunities and escalate desertification, fresh water depletion, biodiversity loss, and global warming.

Mercy International Association (MIA), whose members and partners in mission live and minister in forty countries worldwide, are working closely with the marginalized. We urge world leaders and governments to place at the center and core of the Paris negotiations the necessary and urgent global transformation that can safeguard the wellbeing and sustainability of the community of life.

Our members urge them to deliver a just, rights-based and legally binding global agreement that ensures the global average temperature does not rise beyond the critical temperature of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

MIA believes it is imperative at this moment of opportunity to:

- ensure that the climate agreement of COP 21 respects, protects, and fulfills international human rights obligations, including gender equality and the human right to water and sanitation;
- address the fundamental and science-based need to keep fossil fuels in the ground, including rejecting hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and the unconventional use of oil and natural gas production and all of its related infrastructure;
- prohibit fossil fuel industry representatives from participating in the UN climate negotiations;
- transition to a 100% renewable energy future, reclaiming energy sources as a public good;
- ensure a reliable legal protection against risks of trade related investor-state dispute settlement provisions (ISDS) and arbitration claims targeting climate change action; this includes threats to water, energy, ecosystem sustainability, health provisions, and the outcomes of a legally binding treaty of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris (COP21);
- mandate adaptation and mitigation technologies that are environmentally, economically and socially appropriate and safe;
- ensure adequate, predictable, new, and additional public climate financing to support mitigation and adaptation actions in developing countries, this is to be achieved through mechanisms (such as the Green Climate Fund) that are transparent, country-driven, and responsive to the needs of the impoverished.

Pope Francis states in *Laudato Si'* (185) that “in view of the common good, there is urgent need for politics and economics to enter into a frank dialogue in the service of life, especially human life.”

Paris may well be the final opportunity for enabling that dialogue.

November 25, 2015