

JOINT STATEMENT LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS AT COP 27

10 November 2022

We, parliamentarians of Latin America and the Caribbean participating in the Parliamentary Observatory on Climate Change and Just Transition (the Spanish acronym is OPCC), gathered in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on the occasion of the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention Nations on Climate Change,

Express again, this time in Egypt, our common voice after announcing the creation of the OPCC, in Glasgow, within the context of COP26.

Recalling the purpose of the OPCC to constitute a shared information tool on the status of environmental legislation and parliamentary procedures in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the objective of promoting climate action within the Legislative Branches and other spheres of government, thus contributing to the identification of common actions and needs that the countries will be able to coordinate for the care of our common home.

Committed to multilateralism as a route for the fight against climate change, a challenge of a global nature which therefore requires the cooperation and coordination of the States and communities of the world.

Aware of the leading role played by the legislative power in scrutinizing, proposing and approving legislation and regulatory frameworks relevant to the just transition to sustainable and low-carbon economies in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as exercising political control and approving public plans and budgets for the effective implementation of national climate policies.

Aware of the findings provided by scientific research on climate change and its effects, which for at least two decades has provided humanity and decision-makers with abundant evidence of the urgent need to adopt decisive measures to maintain the global warming well below 2°C, achieve a just transition and ensure that our ways of life are compatible with sustainability, environmental protection and the survival, well-being, and prosperity of our species.

We consider that scientific knowledge on climate change shall be popularized and transmitted to different spheres of society through quality capacity building efforts. In this sense, in July 2022 we held the event "Climate Change Assessment Reports: Implications for the just transition in Latin America", in which parliamentary leaders of the OPCC and Latin American academics, expert authors of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) addressed the state of the art of scientific knowledge on climate change, its future impacts and risks for Latin America, as well as options to mitigate it. We will continue promoting efforts to establish bridges between legislative processes, science, and society in general, thereby making scientific knowledge on climate change accessible to our citizens.

We recognize the nexus between democracy and effective climate action, understanding that democratic institutions are essential for building robust actions that are up to the challenge of

fighting climate change. It is through democracy that collective climate resilience is built in whose process Parliaments play a central role, promoting broad citizen participation, legitimacy, free expression of ideas, constructive criticism, oversight between powers, federal levels and by social and popular initiative, optimization of connectivity and maximization of the potential for diversity of responses, contributing to high-quality open public deliberation.

We urge the prompt and complete implementation of the political agreements in the forum of our parliaments: the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Escazú Agreement and the differential policies demanded by the local contexts of our peoples to contribute to the aforementioned common goals.

In particular, we emphasize the importance of the Escazú Agreement as a crucial instrument for access, generation and dissemination of environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making processes, access to environmental justice and the protection of human rights defenders in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean. We reiterate the need for the Escazú Agreement to be ratified immediately by the States that have not yet done so.

We recall the commitment, within the framework of COP 26, of the parliamentarians participating in the OPCC, with the co-construction of a specific agenda of actions that promote access to information and the design of policies on climate matters. As a central part of that agenda, we developed a [web platform](#) in which we made more than 400 legislative instruments available to global citizens in more than 10 countries in the region. It is a platform that includes legislation on climate change, but also on the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, waste and circular economy, energy, agriculture, water, environmental education, air quality, housing and construction, mining, food, transportation, among others.

We communicate that, currently, in partnership with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) of the United Nations, the OPCC data platform is in the process of being developed, which will present a new, transparent and free form of visualizing the legislative activity of the countries, through indicators, interactive graphs, action panels and comparable data in dashboard format.

We inform that an analysis of the Climate Change Framework Legislation is in the process of being developed, with the aim of presenting a comparative study of the legislative strategies to face and adapt to this phenomenon, in seven Latin American and Caribbean States. The report will serve as a tool on the matter for the different stakeholders, presenting a comparative analysis and highlighting the good practices identified.

We share that, within the framework of this policy brief, which will be presented in the coming months, we recognize a fundamental reality that is part of the agenda of this COP 27: our region, despite being one of the least responsible, historically, for greenhouse gas emissions and, in turn, being one of the most impacted by climate change, is making a substantial contribution to the objectives of the Paris Agreement, the setting of greenhouse gas mitigation goals and the establishment of an institutional framework that promotes sustainable finance in particular. Thus, our countries have incorporated into their legislation not only carbon pricing instruments, such as

the carbon tax or emissions trading schemes, but have also designed innovative fiscal and economic instruments such as national climate change funds or green taxes.

We consider it imperative, in a context of resource crisis, to help promote leadership with a vision of the future, making use of strategies to preserve the natural heritage of our territories. Many economic activities deplete ecological wealth. Therefore, it is important that decision-making progressively include better mechanisms to value the functions and services of nature in accordance with their vital importance. We consider it important that financial entities incorporate environmental-climatic risk criteria in the risk analysis for financial products.

We agree to promote the development of the financial structure that allows the raising of public and private funds, as well as international cooperation funds, for adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage projects, as well as working on urban and rural resilience, capable of facing the climate crisis.

In the same way and with the same importance, we will articulate mechanisms to supervise the resources granted to our countries for the fight against climate change under principles of effectiveness, efficiency, legality, transparency, impartiality, reliability and quality.

We emphasize that the effectiveness of these efforts is framed within the scope of the fulfilment of the commitment that the developed country Parties shall provide financial resources to assist developing country Parties with respect to both mitigation and adaptation in continuation of their existing obligations under the Convention.

We understand that regional solidarity and collective and coordinated action are paramount to ensure that countries can access adaptation funds to safeguard lives, livelihoods and ecosystems in the Caribbean.

We recognize that the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are particularly vulnerable countries in the region and are already suffering disproportionately from the catastrophic impacts of climate change. Extreme weather events are causing successive national-scale disasters in these countries, leading to increasing loss of human life and damage and economic losses that represent a growing share of Gross Domestic Product. The destructive potential of these phenomena will not only increase inequality within and between the nations of the region, but also already represents an existential threat to SIDS in the Caribbean.

We remain committed to informing, updating and guaranteeing access to information on the environmental laws and policies of our parliaments, and to continue improving this space and this tool, especially so that the OPCC can continue to offer a space for the expression of the common voice of our region.


We reinforce our will to build legislative solutions that combine environmental protection with low-emission development and a common long-term strategy aimed at mitigating, adapting and making our region resilient to the effects of climate change.


We reiterate our commitment to continuous work for the protection of the planet, the lives and territories of indigenous and native peoples and defenders of the environment, of all living beings and of our citizens of today and future generations.


We call on parliamentarians from around the world to join their efforts in this initiative, through inter-parliamentary cooperation and alliance for the common goals and challenges that we have as parliamentarians from the Global South.

Signatories

X 
National Senator Gladys González
President of the Environment and Sustainable Development
Commission of the National Senate of Argentina

X 
Senator Coelma Isabel Requena Zárate
President of the Commission on Land and Territory, Natural
Resources and the Environment, Senate of Bolivia


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Deputy Ximena García
Secretary to the Commission of Natural Resources and Human
Environment Conservation, Chamber of Deputies of Argentina

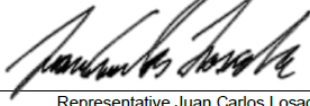
X 
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St. Gwendell Marcelina
Member of Parliament
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
X 
The Honorable Melvin "Mitch" Turnbull
Minister of Natural Resources and Labour
British Virgin Islands Government


X 
Congressman Federico Ruiz
Member of the Special Commission for the Environment
Chamber of Representatives of Uruguay

X 
Senador Jaques Wagner
(PT-BA)
Senator Jaques Wagner
President of the Environment Commission
Federal Senate of Brazil

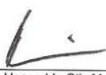
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Senator Ximena Ordenes Neira
Member of the Commission of Future Challenges, Science,
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Deputy Samuel Andrés Pérez Álvarez
Deputy of the Semilla Legislative Bloc
Congress of the Republic of Guatemala

X 
The Honorable Veronica Dorsette-Hector
Parliamentary Secretary
Montserrat

X 
The Honorable Otis Morris
Minister of Home Affairs, Transportation, Broadcasting, Energy and
Utilities and Telecommunications Commission, Turks and Caicos
Islands Government