



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

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COP27 IN SHARM EL-SHEIKH EGYPT 2022 BRIEF

COP 27 is shorthand for the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This year's summit, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on November 6-18, will bring global leaders and members of civil society together on the world stage to deliver action to combat the climate emergency.

WHY COP 27 MATTERS?

This year's keynote speaker—the Earth—has already spoken. Loudly. Through its megaphone of floods and droughts, ice melts and wildfires, hurricanes and cyclones, it has lifted its voice fiercely, clamoring to be heard.

Certainly, some have listened: mostly those who have no choice. Among them are the millions in Pakistan still under flood waters and those in Pacific island nations that are disappearing in the rising seas.

The question is, will these cries of the earth and the poor be heard, as implored by Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, by those who have actually set this fire ablaze?

A handful of developed nations bear special responsibility in this situation. The United States and a few European countries account for more than 40 percent of historic greenhouse gas emissions that are

the primary cause of climate change. The extraction, burning, and slashing of carbon that created great wealth for these nations also wrapped our entire planet in a blanket of greenhouse gases.

Meanwhile, those nations suffering the most devastating consequences of these massive carbon emissions are those that have contributed the least to the problem. The 100 least emitting countries generate 3 percent of total emissions.

This UN Convention marks the 27th time that world leaders are attempting to get it right. Previous attempts have brought victories and missteps. The 21st COP produced the Paris Agreement, an international treaty signed by 196 countries that would limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and create a climate neutral world by 2050. But global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise and the goal is in jeopardy.

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SIX CLIMATE ACTIONS WE HOPE FOR



“Real” zero not “net” zero solutions

The only real solution to stop climate change is to stop greenhouse gases in their tracks. A “real zero” agreement means moving away from fossil fuels, the root cause of the climate crisis. So-called “net zero” strategies have been used by the world’s great polluters to continue their status quo operations while using land-based “off-setting” carbon credits. It is one of many false solutions that responds to the cry of the greedy and will not solve the climate crisis.



Address the issue of loss and damage

Climate change is not just the future, it is the present for many of the world’s most vulnerable citizens who have lost their homes, their livelihoods, and their cultures. Wealthy nations have fiercely resisted providing specific finance for these losses. COP 27 should create a Finance Facility of Loss and Damage guided by the polluter pays principle that is needs and rights-centered, public- and grant-based, and gender-responsive.



Reduce the debt burden of vulnerable nations to allow climate action

Developing countries are suffering from the triple crisis of debt, climate change, and nature loss. Past efforts at COP have fallen far short of needs. One approach is to reduce the debt burdens of vulnerable nations to free resources to implement climate solutions to directly benefit their peoples.



Agroecology as an effective climate adaptation strategy

A quarter of the globe’s greenhouse gas emissions come from forestry and industrial agriculture. Agroecology, a system of food production that nourishes rather than destroys nature, offers a solution. It should be promoted and funded as an adaptation strategy to climate change and a pathway to greater food security.



Respect human rights

Preparations for COP27 in Egypt are taking place against the backdrop of an ongoing and deep-rooted human rights crisis there. Egyptian authorities must take meaningful steps by lifting restrictions of civic space to ensure that civil society organizations, activists, and communities can meaningfully participate without fear of reprisals.



The United States should take a bold leadership role

The recent passage of the Inflation Reduction Act will allow the U.S. to cut its greenhouse gases by 40 percent and return to COP in a new position. We call President Biden to exercise leadership at the upcoming UN Climate Change Convention with moral courage and exceptional ambition.