



# PAN AFRICAN CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE

7 June 2010

**The Chair  
African Group to UNFCCC  
Bonn, Germany**

**Dear Sir,**

## **RE: CONCERN ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA'S CONDUCT IN NEGOTIATIONS**

We are writing to express serious and growing concerns about the role of the South African delegation at the climate talks taking place in Bonn, Germany.

Having keenly watched the climate negotiations over the last two years, we have noticed a consistent practice by certain members of the South African delegation to depart from agreed African Group and G77 position that promote positions supported by the rich countries.

The most recent example is the intervention by South Africa at last Thursday's discussion of shared vision at the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action.

South Africa's delegate, claiming to speak on behalf of the African Group, noted two options on the table which reflect fundamentally different approaches. One of these options is from the Copenhagen Accord and is favoured by developed countries (paragraph 7, option 1). The other is from the consensually agreed Copenhagen text and is supported by the G77 and reflects the science-based African Position formally submitted in Copenhagen (option 2).

South Africa broke with the agreed G77 and African positions by proposing to support option 1, and to move one part of option 2 (relating to the Annex I parties aggregate target for 2020) elsewhere in the text (to paragraph 3). If accepted this proposal would have the following implications:

- First, it would delete the requirement that developed countries' emission reductions are "legally binding", "comparable" and (for Kyoto parties) done under the Kyoto Protocol – a position supported by developed countries.

- Second, removing references to the Kyoto Protocol is widely seen as a stepping-stone to collapsing the two tracks of the negotiations – a position the African Group opposes. It is notable that earlier last week one member of the South African delegation publicly asked the African Group whether it should reconsider its stance on maintaining the two tracks of negotiations.
- Third, by moving text to paragraph 3, South Africa would link Annex I countries mid-term target with their long-term targets and a global goal. By defining a global carbon budget (global goal) and the Annex I share (Annex I targets) it would effectively define a “residual” share (target) for developing countries. In other words, it would divide trillions of dollars of atmospheric space between rich and poor countries, without first establishing a fair basis for doing so, or for ensuring the finance and technology needed by poor countries.

South Africa claims to speak for the Africa Group but has proposed deleting the African Group’s language in the Chair’s text. It has proposed departing from the agreed G77 position. And it has proposed advancing text and options explicitly favoured by the rich countries.

Unfortunately, these are not isolated concerns. Over the last few years, we have seen a practice of interventions that support the interests not of Africa but of the developed countries. These include the controversial role played by the South African delegation at the Bali Climate Conference, its proposals for MRV and a registry, and other proposals.

Our concerns should not be seen as concerns about South Africa or about its delegation. We express our solidarity with all who support Africa’s interests. But we must raise our voice when we see evidence suggesting a consistent pattern by some delegates to weaken Africa’s science-based position and advance options that are against the interest of our continent.

We call for an inquiry within the African Group into the proposal made at that shared vision meeting last week. Was it cleared with the African Group? Was the G77 informed that South Africa would depart from the agreed approach announced in the same session? How do we ensure that South Africa supports the G77 rather than undermining it?

**For and on behalf of Pan African Climate Justice Alliance**

**Mithika Mwenda**  
**Coordinator**

**Contacts:**

Email: [mwemithika@yahoo.com](mailto:mwemithika@yahoo.com)

Cell in Bonn: (+49) 15777797449