



DHAKA PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATION

We, assembled Parliamentarians from Bangladesh, Canada, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, the East African Legislative Assembly, Indonesia, the Maldives, Mali, the Netherlands, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Scotland, Senegal, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda, gathered in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 14th-16th March 2012, **recognise that climate change is now the greatest threat to the lives, livelihoods and welfare of our constituents** – as well as to the ecosystems upon which we depend.

We acknowledge that climate change is a **global problem**, and as such demands a **global response**. The frequency and severity of climate-related hazards such as flooding, drought and cyclones is increasing at an alarming rate. **We must act now** to prevent these hazards from causing further human catastrophes such as famine, widespread disease, malnutrition, and mass forced migration.

We have gathered here with the intention of **defining and advancing the role of elected legislators** in responding to the multiple challenges posed by a warming climate, with respect to both adaptation and mitigation. We are committed to taking sufficient account of **gender-based perspectives**, as well as to **educating the public** about climate change.

We **believe** that mitigation is the best form of adaptation and is the best way to provide **security** to the people. To this end, all countries must pursue sustainable, low-carbon forms of development that **empower the people**.

We **commit to mainstreaming** climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in our respective Parliaments by:

1. *collaborating* across party-political boundaries to work for the welfare of those most affected by climate change;
2. *establishing*, where they do not already exist, parliamentary committees or multi-party caucuses for monitoring and oversight of climate-related policy; and
3. *organising* awareness-raising and capacity-building programmes to deepen our understanding of – and ability to respond to – the threats from climate change and the solutions to those threats.

In our role as **lawmakers**, we will legislate and support policy to:

1. *develop* integrated local, national and regional frameworks for climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction (DRR) – including establishing risk assessment methodologies, early warning systems, hazard mapping and disaster response teams;
2. take steps to *implement* the Hyogo Framework for Action, which provides ready tools for countries to take immediate actions to reduce the risks associated with climate-related hazards; and
3. *prioritise* funding for climate-friendly programmes, including climate change adaptation (CCA), energy efficiency projects and measures to incentivise investment in renewable energy.

In our role as **representatives** of the people, we will **raise awareness** of climate issues and **build support** for our actions by:

1. *fostering* dialogue, debate and discussion with constituents (including women, youth and children), civil society groups, NGOs, businesses, trade unions, farmers and other stakeholders, and *communicating* the needs and experiences of our constituents to policy-makers at the national level;
2. *involving* the public in the policy-making process through the use of participatory consultations; and
3. *engaging* with news and social media to ensure that the public is adequately informed about climate change and its impacts.

In our role as **political leaders**, we will forge strategic alliances to **urge governments worldwide** to:

1. accept the principle of common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR), recognise that deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions are required well before 2020 if there is to be any hope of limiting the global temperature rise to 2°C, and raise the level of ambition to aim for a 1.5°C limit;
2. honour their commitments to provide new and additional finance for vulnerable countries, including US\$30bn immediately as fast-start funding for the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and US\$100bn per year by 2020, as well as financing the Least Developed Countries Fund; and
3. to engage in a constructive debate on the issue of technology transfer and production transfer, with a view to making the equipment needed for climate change mitigation and adaptation affordable in the countries of the Global South.

In our role as **advocates**, we will **urge our governments** to:

1. develop national action plans for climate change adaptation (CCA), disaster risk reduction (DRR) and nationally-appropriate mitigation actions;
2. allocate a fixed proportion of the national budget to a dedicated fund for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and advance climate-sensitive national budgets;
3. abolish fossil fuel subsidies in a gradual manner which does not hurt the poorest people – and ensure availability of alternatives to fossil fuels.

In our **oversight** role, we will **hold the executive to account** on issues relating to climate change by:

1. *ensuring* that international commitments on climate change made by our governments are ratified and properly implemented;
2. *reviewing* government budgets, expenditure and legislation, particularly when they do not take sufficient account of climate change – such as by investing in infrastructure that locks economies into fossil fuel dependency; and
3. *monitoring* disbursement of international climate finance to ensure it is spent effectively and transparently.

In order to more effectively collaborate on the urgent priorities we have identified, we **hereby establish** a global network of Parliamentarians in support of people most vulnerable to climate change, with the working title “Parliamentarians for Climate Justice”.

The Network will be unique in that it will focus its resources on the people most vulnerable to climate change – wherever in the world they may be. It will **be open to all MPs** who endorse this Declaration and the forthcoming Statement of Principles, and will include adequate representation of women and indigenous peoples. The **Founding Members** present at the Dhaka conference encourage our parliamentary colleagues to join the network.

This new network will promote **strategic alliances** of Parliaments and Parliamentarians, working through existing structures where possible – including cross-party groups and parliamentary networks. It will be a platform for MPs to share **knowledge, information and best practice** and to engage with social and news media.

A full **Action Plan and Statement of Principles** for the Network will be elaborated by the Steering Committee by the end of April 2012.

Immediate actions will include forming a **Steering Committee** to take decisions on policy priorities and **seeking funding** to organise gatherings and to employ a small Secretariat, which will likely be hosted within an existing organisation. If funds are secured, the Network will **organise regional and international conferences** on specific issues relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and will **organise delegations** of legislators to attend key UN conferences and to visit the most vulnerable communities so that MPs can see for themselves the everyday impacts of climate change.

In concluding, we communicate our **heartfelt thanks** to the Parliament of Bangladesh and to the UNDP for organising this timely and important conference, as well as to the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands. We call upon colleagues in our respective Parliaments to take **urgent action** to implement the actions set out here. Climate change is the greatest threat humanity has ever faced. If we act together, and act now, we can rise to the challenge.