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WOMEN✳GENDER CONSTITUENCY

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

"Shamefully Inadequate" — At COP31, Wealthy Countries Fail to Meet Finance Obligations That Would Support Developing Countries Hit by Climate Impacts – **November 18, 2026, ANTALYA, TÜRKIYE**

Developed countries commit just US$50 at a key moment for the Adaptation Fund, and UNFCCC constituencies and allies call on developed countries to fulfill their obligations.

On Tuesday night, during crunch time for negotiations in Antalya, where the call to triple adaptation funding is front and center, the Adaptation Fund held its annual high-level contributor dialogue. This was an opportunity for contributors to this vital Fund to announce their commitments to supporting grant-based climate finance for urgent adaptation actions — and show good will towards an ambitious Antalya outcome. This vital support did not arrive. Instead, the handful of pledges announced were not only shamefully short of what developing countries need, but the US$50 million amounts to only one sixth of the already painfully modest US$300 million annual resource mobilization floor the Adaptation Fund has set. This was yet another sign that developed countries are turning their back on their obligation to deliver adaptation finance under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

The Adaptation Fund is the only multilateral climate fund providing full-cost grant financing exclusively for adaptation to all developing countries. As the pioneer of direct access, it is a unique and necessary fund in the climate finance architecture, nimble and responsive to developing countries, with particular pathways and a focus on gender-responsive, locally-led climate action and with capacity support for direct implementing partners from developing countries, including from non-governmental organizations.

During Tuesday evening's event, only three contributors — Spain, Germany, and Ireland — announced pledges that, when added to previous pledges from Estonia, Portugal, and Belgium's Brussels region, which were not present at the event, total US$50 million. This is an abysmal showing at COP31, where scaling up delivery of adaptation finance is a central demand of campaigners and developing countries. Rather than a one-time fluke, this marks the fourth consecutive year in which developed countries have pledged amounts far short of the Fund's resource mobilization target, set at a minimum of US$1.2 billion for 2026-2029 by the Board.

"The persistent, significant underfunding of the Adaptation Fund is a betrayal of this multilateral process. It is a demonstration of why developing country Parties are demanding specificity on the provision and delivery of climate finance here at COP31, with a clear decision on a climate finance work program focused on Article 9.1. Developed country assurances in the negotiations that commitments are being taken seriously are immediately and fundamentally undermined by the persistent failure to support the Adaptation Fund adequately. Developed countries are ignoring the needs of frontline communities and Indigenous Peoples, including women, girls, and gender-diverse people, who often bear the brunt of adapting to a climate-ravaged world. If these are the signals that Antalya and the COP31 are sending that existing commitments will be fulfilled, the signals received, indeed, point to a bleak world of broken promises and devastated lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems."

Tara Daniel, WEDO, and Liane Schalatek, Heinrich Böll Foundation Washington, DC, — co-coordinators of the Women and Gender Constituency's Climate Finance Working Group

The imperative of grants-based climate finance delivery is reaffirmed by the recent UNEP Adaptation Gap report, estimating adaptation finance needs at around US$305 billion per year by 2035, or US$420 billion if inflation is factored in, and finds that even full delivery of the tripling of adaptation finance called for by governments at COP30 would cover only 20 to 29% of needs.

With this incredibly small number of contributors and such meager contributions, the Adaptation Fund will be unable to meet the growing demand from its national, regional, and international access entities, which have submitted record funding requests totaling almost US$2 billion. These proposed projects are designed to meet the needs of communities, workers, and marginalized groups, including Indigenous Peoples, at the frontline of the climate crisis.

"As climate impacts worsen, adaptation is what keeps communities, livelihoods, and countries safe, and it has rightly climbed the political agenda. Yet the political attention adaptation now commands stands in stark contrast to the money governments are willing to put on the table. Promises to triple the Adaptation Fund's disbursements by 2030 ring hollow when contributions are declining. Early warning systems, clean water, healthcare, and resilient food systems are public goods, not commercial ventures. They must be financed through grants, not loans that force vulnerable countries and future generations deeper into debt. You cannot celebrate adaptation as a global priority while starving the very Fund meant to deliver it. This High-Level Contributor Dialogue must move beyond expressions of solidarity to concrete, new, and additional financial commitments. Adaptation cannot run on applause. It needs money."

Amos Wemanya, PowerShift Africa

While the pledges from Spain, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Estonia, and Brussels are appreciated, they drastically underdeliver what is needed and what is mandated. All developed country Parties

have an obligation to support adaptation action, a key goal of the Paris Agreement, and many of these governments are capable of scaling up their contributions to meet the needs. Especially given the clarity of the science on the needs gap and the recent decisions in the UNFCCC space, such as the new collective quantified goal, this abominable abdication of responsibility is incompatible with developed countries' professed commitments to climate finance and climate action overall.

As people's lives have been cast aside, livelihoods dismissed, biodiversity and ecosystems forsaken, we call on all developed countries that have not yet pledged to do so before the close of COP31. How and when the tripling of adaptation finance is delivered will matter as much as whether it is delivered. A significant share must flow through grant-based, directly accessible channels such as the Adaptation Fund.

Additional Quotes

"The Adaptation Fund holds an essential role in delivering climate finance to communities and as the multilateral climate fund with an explicit intersectional approach to its operational strategy within its Gender Policy plan, it is an essential vehicle to providing access to those leading climate solutions. The consistent lack of funding to the Adaptation Fund by country Parties that claim to recognize the importance of gender equality furthers mistrust in so-called allies for gender responsive climate action."

Alexandria Gordon, Manager of Policy and Development, WEDO

"Adaptation is about survival. We didn't come to Antalya with sky-high ambitions, but what has been put on the table is pure injustice. Last year, a mere $135 million was pledged — now, only $50 million.

Four consecutive years of broken promises are not a funding gap but a failure of the political will of developed countries. Every dollar withheld leaves a community defenceless on the front lines of a crisis they did not cause. Developed countries have offered a pittance, not a pledge to the Adaptation Fund. But they could turn this around before COP31 closes. The money exists, but the care for people's lives is missing."

Pooja Dave, Global Policy Lead, Climate Action Network International

"The money to protect communities from the climate crisis exists. The problem is that rich countries choose to spend it on the very fossil fuels driving the destruction. Governments are pouring billions in public money into oil and gas subsidies while claiming they can't afford to help communities survive a crisis they did the least to cause. By ending fossil fuel subsidies, making big polluters pay, and changing unfair financial rules, rich countries could unlock trillions in public finance. There is simply no excuse for leaving the Adaptation Fund begging for scraps while the fossil fuel industry continues to rake in public money."

Laurie van der Burg, Global Public Finance Manager at Oil Change International

"Developed countries would rather continue pouring billions of dollars into militaries and wars, and fossil fuel expansion, than deliver their financial obligations to the Global South. The Nepal catastrophe is a clear sign that people across the Global South will continue losing their lives and livelihoods to worsening climate-induced disasters unless trillions of dollars are delivered in climate finance for adaptation and loss and damage for all developing countries. The new pledge by developed countries is clearly a political decision and an insult in the face of the tragedy in Nepal."

Rachitaa Gupta, Global Coordinator, Global Campaign to Demand Justice

"Indigenous Peoples are already leading adaptation actions in our territories. Indigenous women protect native seeds, restore degraded lands, and keep our food systems alive. The US$50 million pledge to the Adaptation Fund falls far short of what this work demands. Developing countries must step up and commit more before COP31 closes. Indigenous Peoples must have a seat at the table where the Fund sets its priorities and decides where and how the money goes. Our own institutions and organizations must have direct access to grants so we can fund the priorities that our Peoples define. And any project that affects our lands and territories must respect our right to self-determination and our right to free, prior and informed consent."

Eileen Mairena Cunningham, Indigenous Peoples Organization Focal Point for the UNFCCC

"Persons with disabilities are often the last to be warned and the last to be reached when climate disasters hit. Adaptation finance pays for the accessible early warning, health care and infrastructure that decide whether we survive. Yet developed countries have pledged just US$50 million to the Adaptation Fund. They must make predictable, grant-based commitments before COP31 closes and ensure persons with disabilities are equally involved in deciding how the money is spent. Nothing about us without us."

Josephine Mwatibo & Gordon Rattray — UNFCCC Focal Points of the Disability Climate Caucus

"Ahead of COP31, more than one hundred organizations from across the international health and climate community have underscored the importance of adaptation finance for protection of health and lives. Adaptation finance provides a lifeline for developing countries so they can implement national adaptation plans and protect health through resilient healthcare, agriculture, and sanitation. Public grant-based finance, such as that channelled through the Adaptation Fund, is essential to avoid exacerbating the cycles of debt, poverty, and disease driven by high-interest loans. People are getting injured, sick, and dying in developing countries as a direct result of climate change impacts they did not cause, due to the neglect by developed countries to meet their financial obligations to help these countries adapt. In doing so, developed countries are betraying the very premise of a collective international approach to the shared global health threat that climate change represents."

Jeni Miller, Executive Director of the Global Climate and Health Alliance

“The climate crisis is already having devastating effects on communities across the globe, and the Adaptation Fund needs to be a promise to all communities not to be left behind in building resilience. The pledges we have seen today, however, fall far short of the desperately needed support. By not providing sufficient financial support, developed countries are not only failing today’s frontline communities but risking the lives and futures of young people and generations yet to come. Every dollar invested in adaptation saves lives and future costs, costs which otherwise fall on future generations. Pledging sufficient resources to the adaptation fund is a question of intergenerational justice. The money is there, but it is spent on fossil fuels and militarization!”

Marguerita Delgado, YOUNGO Climate Finance Contact Point

“For the third year in a row, rich countries have failed to meet the modest $300 million Adaptation Fund target – which is just 0.1% of the $300 billion Global South countries need to adapt to a crisis they did little to create. We’re being told there is no money, but taxing luxury carbon, from private jets to the excess profits of fossil fuel corporations, could raise over $445 billion a year. So, let’s stop pretending this is about money. It’s about political choices, priorities, and accountability. With communities from Nepal to the Sahel being battered by escalating climate disasters, the solution is simple: make rich polluters pay.”

Nafkote Dabi, Oxfam Climate Policy Lead

"Year after year, developed countries sacrifice the future of young people, choosing to prioritize war, wealth, and weapons over our collective well-being. Wealthy countries repeatedly promise to serve as reliable partners for our future, while refusing to put their money where their mouth is. We are tired of empty promises and demand climate justice, which requires redistribution of wealth through public, grant-based, concessional financing. We, as the next generation, can not be left to foot the bill for the failures of this year's COP. As young people, we are embarrassed by the contributions of nations that total less than .001% of their GDPs — wealth they built by underdeveloping the Global South and by creating the conditions of the climate injustice we experience now. Contributions for climate adaptation are not charity; they are investments that pay dividends toward our collective future; they are what developed countries owe to the world."

Kaviya Chidambaram, YOUNGO Working Group on Adaptation

“When a heat warning fails to reach an older person living alone, or a flood cuts off access to essential medicines and care, that is a gap adaptation finance can help close. We urge developed countries to make predictable, multi-year grant commitments to the Adaptation Fund and ensure that older people and their organisations have a say in what gets funded and how success is measured.”

Hari Krishna Nibanupudi, Global Climate Change Adviser, HelpAge International

This is a joint press release by the rights-based constituencies of the UNFCCC — the Women and Gender Constituency, Climate Action Network, The Global Campaign to Demand Climate Justice, Indigenous Peoples Organizations, YOUNGO, the children and youth constituency, and TUNGO — and the Disability Caucus and the Health community.