

Contributions to the position of the Brazilian Government at the 16th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 16) that will be held in Cancun, Mexico, between November 29 and December 10th, 2010

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The Working Group on Climate Change, Poverty and Inequality (GTMCP) of the Brazilian Forum on Climate Change (FBMC) has been discussing the issue of climate change and how it can affect the Brazilian population, particularly poor and vulnerable segments. The GTMCP believes that the last 15th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - COP 15 - resulted in few developments, both from the point of view of mitigation and of adaptation, to extreme weather variations.

The 16th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 16) that will be held in Cancun, Mexico, between November 29 and December 10, 2010 affords a new opportunity for the nations of the world to agree on concrete actions to reduce the impacts of climate change, particularly its human impacts.

The GTMCP believes that, given its geopolitical importance and accumulated experience in implementing a significant set of social and public policies designed to ensure food and nutrition security, Brazil should take a leadership position during COP 16 in proposing measures to address climate change. For this purpose, the GTMC proposes that the Brazilian Government should:

- Take an active and assertive role in international negotiations for defending an agenda that fosters the Human Right to Adequate Food and Food and Nutrition Security of poor populations, which are the most vulnerable to climate variability.
- Take on voluntary commitments publicly and formally with measurable, reportable, and verifiable objectives to limit its carbon emissions associated with initiatives designed to promote social inclusion, particularly to reduce deforestation; to expand the area allocated to agroecological food production, reducing monoculture schemes based on agrochemical products; to use the sun, wind, and water flow as matrices for decentralized energy production, reducing the number and size of artificial lakes used for hydroelectric energy generation and the use of coal, diesel, and gas in thermal plants.
- Incorporate a vision of vulnerability, i.e., the vision that the impacts of climate change do not affect all men and women in the same way and that, therefore, domestic public policies and international decisions should be largely focused on poorer and less resilient communities.
- Recognize that climate change affects men and women in different ways and that it can contribute to enhance the subordination and difficulties faced by women to access land, water, food, and other natural and productive resources.
- Recognize that the lack of resources tends to cause migration of husbands and sons, increasing the workload of women, who must then take responsibility not only for taking care of their families, but also for producing food for them.

- Propose the creation of an International Working Group to discuss in greater depth the impacts of climate change on the lives of women, particularly vulnerable women, with the aim of building specific public policies to meet the demands of women.
- Defend the concept of adaptation to climate change not as an end in itself or only in the light of its consequences, but also considering the causes of the problem. Adaptation should be seen as adjustments in social, economic, and environmental systems to the current and expected effects of global warming, preventing its impacts in order to reduce vulnerability to climate change or variability, particularly of poorer communities and regions. For this reason, adaptation should be part of a General Public Policy Plan to address climate change, which should combine, on an equal footing, prevention, adaptation, resilience, and mitigation aspects. Prevention, mitigation, and resilience are concepts related to adaptation and policies should consider them as a whole.
- Defend the idea that countries in both the North and South should create mechanisms to ensure that economic changes brought about by climate change are not harmful to male and female workers. For this purpose, governments should invest massively in creating green jobs that are sustainable and ensure dignified working conditions.
- Defend, in the negotiations, an adaptation concept based on the notion of climate justice, according to which the burden of adjustments to the climate crisis should be borne by those who were historically responsible for bringing them about and not by those who contributed less to it and who are the main, and potential, victims of climate change.
- Defend public and voluntary financing schemes not linked to compensations for facing climate change and adapting to it.
- Defend the idea that developed countries should be the main funders of the Adaptation Fund to be managed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - UNFCCC. The Adaptation Fund should be sustained with a minimum contribution of 6% (as proposed in the Cochabamba Declaration) of the annual GDP of developed countries and be exclusively earmarked for facing the impacts of climate change. These funds should be additional to the Official Development Assistance (ODA), reparatory and non-offsetting, and they should be applied until developed countries reduce their emissions and climate stabilizes.
- Support the United Nations as the international manager of financial resources allocated to adaptation and make sure that such management is responsible, equitable, transparent, and subject to social control.
- Propose that a major part of the resources of the Adaptation Fund are earmarked for generating inclusion and risk-reducing alternatives for groups of vulnerable women.
- Incorporate the concepts of the Human Right to Adequate Food, of food and nutrition security and sovereignty, of family farming, of environmental and climate justice, of the need to defend indigenous peoples, traditional communities, biodiversity and forests into future agreements and mechanisms.
- Press the Annex I member countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by, at least, 40% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050, based on the recognition of the historical responsibility of these countries.
- Support the adoption of measurable, reportable and verifiable (MRV) measures for emerging countries to reduce the speed of their emissions and thus contribute to reduce global warming.

- Support the proposals contained in the Cochabamba Declaration – submitted by governments and civil society in a transparent, participatory, and equitable fashion during the International Peoples' Conference on Climate Change held in April 2010 – which were included in the negotiating text of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) in Bonn, in August 2010, so that they are approved by the parties if an agreement is reached at COP 16.

- Recognize the importance of, and defend, the need to recover and preserve the knowledge accumulated by family and peasant agriculture, by indigenous peoples and traditional communities, assuming that this knowledge, combined with scientific knowledge, constitutes the foundation for building alternatives for facing climate change both in mitigation and adaptation actions.

- Present the proposal for preparing a Global Map of Social Vulnerability to Climate Change, identifying which countries and peoples of the world are vulnerable, where they are, and to what levels of vulnerability they are exposed to.

- Support the notion that technology be transferred from the North to the South free of charge, without conditionalities, and in such a way that it cannot be used as an offsetting mechanism. The patent system should not be used to limit or prevent technology transfer. Technology transfer should not be used to generate dependence on the part of Southern countries.