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## **FAITH LEADERS UNITE TO SUPPORT AN INCLUSIVE LOSS AND DAMAGE FUND AHEAD OF COP28, CHAMPIONING THE CAUSE OF THE POOR**

One week after the release of Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Laudate Deum*, faith leaders around the world are endorsing support for a Loss and Damage Fund to mitigate the detrimental and unjust impacts of climate change already affecting the poor. Many Global South nations contribute the least to the climate crisis, yet pay the heaviest price of other nations' operations. At COP28 (November 30 – December 12), faith leaders will deliver a statement calling on world leaders to protect the poor and work towards true climate justice.

“Solidarity demands urgent action by those with means and responsibility. A Loss and Damage Fund that genuinely meets the needs of people at the frontlines of the climate emergency is not just a responsibility; it is an undeniable moral imperative,” says President of Caritas Internationalis Msgr. Archbishop Isao Kikuchi.

Loss and Damage refers to the impacts of climate change that are already being experienced around the world, especially by people in the Global South. Following the global climate talks at COP27 in Egypt last year, a breakthrough decision was reached to establish a Loss and Damage Fund for communities suffering from the current climate emergency.

Senior Vatican representatives, faith based groups from climate vulnerable countries and diverse stakeholders all contributed to the discussions held at COP27, and particularly reflected on the moral case for action on Loss and Damage. According to the UNHCR, more than 20 million people are forced to leave their homes due to extreme weather events including sea-level rise, prolonged droughts and severe flooding, and environmental degradation.

Caritas Internationalis and SCIAF (Caritas Scotland), together with CIDSE and the Laudato Si' Movement, believe that there is a deep disharmony at the heart of the climate crisis which is hurting our poorest brothers and sisters the most.

“A Loss and Damage fund should not just be symbolic, but one that supports those who bear the brunt of the climate crisis. In the face of the escalating climate crisis, this commitment to fairness and accountability should serve as the cornerstone of efforts. Let us rally together in solidarity and purpose!” says Alistair Dutton, Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis

The final details of the Loss and Damage Fund will be agreed at COP28 in Dubai later this year, and faith leaders will deliver their statement in support of a fit-for-purpose fund to protect the poor which: gets money to the people who need it the most; is adequately resourced based on the polluter-pays principle; fully addresses non-economic losses and damages; and corrects the injustice of poorer nations paying the price of other nations' actions.

The urgency to act is growing every day and the price for our lifestyles is already being paid by those who have contributed the least to the climate disaster. "The Loss and Damage fund is simply a matter of justice and recognition of responsibility. What's needed now is the courage to take the decisions and make the fund and mechanisms a reality," says Josianne Gauthier, Secretary General of CIDSE.

In light of the realities of the climate crisis, Tomás Insua, Executive Director of the Laudato Si' Movement, calls for shared vision for the future based on justice and compassion: "Let us be the generation that rises above indifference, challenges the status quo, and paves the way for true solidarity with the Loss and Damage Fund."

Endorse the Loss and Damage Fund statement here: <https://campaign.sciaf.org.uk/loss-and-damage-moral-case-action>

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