

Foreword

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I am delighted that such a broad group of environment and development organisations, many of which are faith based, have come together to speak with a common voice, drawing attention to climate change in the African context. It is well known that climate change will have particularly devastating effects on Africa. Indeed, case studies in this report suggest that this is already happening. But this report also shows the strength and creativity of African people in times of stress. What is needed most now is that Africans are supported in their efforts to build on these strengths.

The UK Prime Minister Tony Blair’s stated commitment to tackling climate change and helping Africa is most welcome. It is important to understand that Africa and climate change are intrinsically linked, as climate change will affect the welfare of Africans for years to come. Africans look forward to seeing some firm outcomes from these commitments during Blair’s presidency of the G8 and the European Union. Words will not be enough. The richest countries of the world, as represented by the G8, have a responsibility to help the poorest. This is not just charity, but a moral obligation. The world’s wealthiest countries have emitted more than their fair share of greenhouse gases. Resultant floods, droughts and other climate change impacts continue to fall disproportionately on the world’s poorest people and countries, many of which are in Africa.

Rich countries must therefore help poorer countries in two ways. They must reduce their greenhouse gas emissions so that the effects of climate change suffered by Africa’s poor do not get worse. They also have an obligation to help poor countries adapt to the negative impacts of climate change, which cannot be avoided.

[Archbishop Desmond Tutu](#)