

“STOP THE MADNESS”

19th November 2013

Dear Minister:

Act now to establish an international mechanism on climate change-induced loss and damage at COP19 in Warsaw. Inevitable loss and damage is a reality – we need solutions now!

The world has now entered the era of devastating climate change-induced loss and damage. Our collective failure to adequately mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and support necessary adaptation actions means that vulnerable communities, ecosystems and countries face increasing loss and damage due to climate change impacts on an unprecedented scale. Typhoon Haiyan, which has affected nearly 13 million people in the Philippines alone, is a stark reminder of just how serious the impacts of major storms and extreme weather-related events can be.

In 1992, developed countries agreed to take the lead in addressing climate change under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Yet they have failed to take sufficient action in line the latest climate science. While politicians talk, emissions are increasing at an alarming rate, making a global temperature rise of more than 4 degrees Celsius by 2100 a distinct possibility.

There is no time to lose. COP19 must be a historic milestone and those most responsible for climate change must adhere to their legal and moral responsibilities for reducing and tackling climate change impacts. Yet, even with urgent action, the world will increasingly experience substantial loss and damage. **In the absence of adequate mitigation and support for adaptation, an international mechanism on loss and damage is not an option – it is a necessity.**

Whilst the UNFCCC has existing mechanisms and instruments on mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and clean development, there is no specific mechanism to address loss and damage. Nor can loss and damage simply be subsumed under existing frameworks. It requires a dedicated international mechanism to advance the important work of tackling climate change impacts and compensate countries for the loss and damage they are increasingly sustaining.

Governments agreed at COP18 that the UNFCCC’s role on loss and damage includes enhancing knowledge and understanding; strengthening global coordination and coherence; and enhancing action and support to address loss and damage. More than 130 developing countries have now issued a joint proposal for an international mechanism. **We the undersigned now urgently call on the Conference of the Parties to establish an international mechanism on loss and damage in Warsaw.**

Sincerely,

We the undersigned (over 100 organisations) call on governments to establish an international mechanism on Loss and Damage at COP19.