When patriarchy burns – the planet breathes
#SmashPatriarchyNotPlanet

To the Heads of UN Member States,

As you gather in Dubai for the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP28), we urge you to stand with women, girls, and non-binary people in all their diversity. No single country in the world has eradicated Gender Based Violence (GBV) despite decades of efforts. Instead, we are witnessing women being pushed into the most precarious and violent conditions. Pair that with the climate crisis humanity is facing and we have the perfect storm to increase the systematic erosion of women's rights. The estimated period to achieve gender equality has reached 131 years. The impacts of climate change, such as higher temperatures, unpredictable rainfall, sea-level rises, droughts, floods, and storms are also reinforcing gendered inequalities, further exacerbating the levels of violence that women, trans, and non-binary people face.

GBV and climate crisis share common origins, making gender and climate injustice two facets of the same oppressive reality. Capitalism, patriarchy, and colonialism essentially drive these facets. Through GBV and climate crisis, these systems are exploiting both women and the planet, solely for the benefit of the rich and powerful. This must stop! And it can be done in our lifetime. Feminist and climate justice movements have economic alternatives and solutions, to end and prevent all sorts of discriminatory norms, practices, and laws, it is time to listen to them. The inaction of your governments on GBV and Climate Justice is making women and girls in all their diversity face most violent consequences. Your governments, often influenced by the anti-feminist and anti-environment lobbies are making active policy choices to exploit women and nature alike. As the Heads of UN Member States, we call on you to ensure feminist voices are heard at COP28 and beyond to combat this.

Agricultural labourers, Indigenous and Black communities as well as feminist movements remain at the forefront of the struggles to protect land, natural resources, and planet despite the rigged system and violence. Subsequently, the governments and corporations along with anti-feminist, anti-environment lobbies are cracking down on these movements as they often express incompatibility of the capitalist status quo with life on this planet. While the environment and women rights defenders continue to be murdered or incarcerated, the real perpetrators – rich and powerful men of this planet, get the seat at decision making tables in the governments, international bodies and even at COP28. This is sheer injustice! These contradictions are making us question the ability of institutions to deliver gender and climate justice, without which you cannot build a planet free of poverty, violence, and exploitation.

The UN and your governments persistently fail women, trans, and non-binary people and with that humanity and the planet. But we remain determined! We, the undersigned, urge the UN Member States through this letter to listen and follow the climate justice and feminist movements, which have power to uproot all oppressive systems. The feminist power is not just capable of abolishing GBV but also of creating economies and societies which work for all, not just the privileged few.

To #SmashPatriarchyNotPlanet, we seek urgent adoption of feminist alternatives in the climate policies and action plans by the governments of the UN Member States as listed below:

- The Member States must have clear policies and legal commitments to protect women rights defenders, especially from energy and extractive companies. The preventive and protective measures regarding this can emerge from the ratification treaties such as the Escazu agreement.
Ensure that women and communities impacted by energy and extractive industries have access to effective, safe, and accountable grievance and redress mechanisms, including through judicial and financial remedies.

The Member States must analyse and meaningfully integrate climate-related security risks into their implementation of UN resolution on Women, Peace, and Security (UNSCR 1325)\(^\text{iv}\).

Ensure direct, flexible and long-term funding for local communities and women-led climate initiatives in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

Create and execute gender-responsive migration policies, services and laws to protect migrant women and girls which address GBV and trafficking, in the context of climate change.

Effectively integrate Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in disaster risk management process and national climate action plans.

Abandon promoting contraception as a solution to climate change as it places unfair burden on those least responsible for the crisis. It also violates women’s bodily autonomy and self-determination.

Recognise and value traditional knowledge of women related to climate adaptation, governance, and agriculture while making climate decisions.

Guarantee safe, equal and meaningful participation of youth, women, trans and non-binary people in natural resource governance, with power in planning process and utilisation of revenues from extractive industries.

Protect women’s and their communities’ land rights in climate mitigation activities related to land as it affects their food security and livelihoods.

Women, agricultural labourers, Indigenous and Black communities should lead the decisions on land-based solutions to climate change at all levels of governance.

The Member States should provide substantial support to ministries concerning women’s rights, feminist organisations, and UNFCCC gender focal points to collaborate with Climate Investment Fund (CIF), Adaptation Fund (AF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) for implementation of national climate action plans.

Acknowledge that climate policies can be reflection of patriarchal values and demand gender justice in all climate negotiations including implementation of Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan.\(^v\)

Adopt a wealth tax on the super-rich that tackles climate crisis and funds feminist economic alternatives to climate change.

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\(^3\) Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean [https://repositorio.cepal.org/items/86cae662-f81c-4b45-a04a-058e8d26143c](https://repositorio.cepal.org/items/86cae662-f81c-4b45-a04a-058e8d26143c)
