



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PROTOCOL
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24 January 2024

**REPORT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION TO
THE 28TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE,
THE 18TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING
AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE KYOTO PROTOCOL AND
THE 5TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS
THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PARIS AGREEMENT
(COP28/CMP18/CMA5)**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

30 November to 12 December 2023

WE, THE PEOPLE



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report of the South African Parliamentary Delegation to the 28th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) outlines the country's active participation in the international climate forum held in Dubai from November 30 to 12 December 2023. The delegation, led by the Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula, engaged in various activities, including panel discussions and presentations, underscoring South Africa's commitment to addressing climate change.

The report highlights key events attended by the delegation, such as the Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) sessions and joint parliamentary gatherings. Noteworthy panel discussions focused on South Africa's national food agenda, climate-resilient legislation, just transition progress, and sustainable trade considerations. The delegation emphasised the importance of international collaboration, showcased legislative initiatives, and advocated for financial support for climate action.

President C. Ramaphosa's address at COP28 underscored the need for deeper engagement with stakeholders and emphasised the financial requirements for South Africa's transition. The report outlines the delegation's engagement in the Inter-Parliamentary Union event, where parliamentary roles in climate action were discussed, and recommendations were made for legislative oversight.

The South Africa participation to the COP 28 commence with the bilateral meeting between the Members of the delegation and the leadership of Climate Parliament. Climate Parliament is one of the Lobby Group on climate change mandated by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. UNIDO is the specialized agency with a unique mandate to promote and accelerate sustainable industrial development.

The Climate Parliament is an international multi-partisan network of legislators combating climate change worldwide. The Climate Parliament conceived and helped to launch the Green Grids Initiative at COP 26 in Glasgow in 2021. It serves as a global secretariat for the initiative and have launched a number of new projects to support its core objective of accelerating the construction of the new infrastructure needed for a world powered by renewable energy. Climate Parliament is geared towards assisting Members of Parliament and staff on capacity building related programmes related to climate change within the context of just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

Through their delegation led by their Secretary General Climate Parliament expressed the objectives of requesting the South African Parliament to consider formally affiliate under this structure with the objective of benefiting from its programmes of capacity building on technical expertise and building awareness on climate change and other related programmes on climate finance.

The leadership of the South African delegation through the House Chairpers Hon Frollick, Hon Chief Whip of the Majority Party, appreciated the background relating to the work and relevance



of Climate Parliament but further expressed concerns in terms of the composition of the membership of this organization and the manner in which there is not clear lines of accountability on Members of Parliament who participated in this organization previously. Hon Members further appreciated the need for capacity building in all parliaments that are always under resourced and how the programme can help members raise awareness about climate change hazards in their constituencies, broader civic society by empowering MPs with climate adaptation related skills. In the context of climate change bill that is currently before the National Council of Provinces, capacity building of Members servicing different constituencies is imperative.

The Parliament delegation further hold bilateral meetings with likeminded parliamentarians from the Brazil, Germany and the European Parliament delegation as well as the bilateral meeting with the South African High Commissioner in the United Arab Emirates. The key objective was to share experiences and best practices on issues of renewable energy, Just transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy and climate finance.

Key outcomes of COP28 include agreements on accelerating emissions cuts, phasing out fossil fuels, strengthening the Global Stocktake (GST), boosting climate finance, and elevating the role of parliaments and civil society. Despite progress, challenges and the urgency of continued cooperation were acknowledged. The report concludes with parliamentary recommendations, including continuous monitoring and reporting, increased support for climate finance, cross-sectoral collaboration, gender-responsive action, acceleration of the energy transition, and leading by example in reducing carbon footprint. These recommendations aim to align South Africa's legislative efforts with global climate goals and ensure the effective implementation of climate agreements.



2 INTRODUCTION

The 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) was convened from 30 November to 12 December 2023 at the Expo City Dubai in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The COP is the main decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where 198 nations and the European Union, all signatories to the Framework Convention, come together to make crucial decisions about tackling the climate crisis. South Africa has been a party to the UNFCCC since 1997 and ratified its Kyoto Protocol in 2002 and the Paris Agreement in 2016. The Kyoto Protocol is an agreement where ‘developed’ countries committed to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while the Paris Agreement is a global effort, where all countries work together to limit global warming to 1.5°C and adapt to the new climate reality. The two binding agreements are the cornerstone of the COP meetings.

The COP is much more than just an annual event. It's a year-round process that sets ambitious goals, fosters international cooperation, and tracks progress on climate action. It's where governments, scientists, activists, and businesses join forces to build a sustainable future for all. Demonstrating its unwavering commitment to the UN Climate Change Convention, South Africa's Parliament has consistently sent delegations of legislators to both the COP meetings and the parliamentary events held alongside them for over a decade.

COP28 comprised the fifth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 5); the 18th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 18); the 59th meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 59); and the 59th meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 59). COP28 was crucial because of the first Global Stocktake that looked back on progress under the Paris Agreement.

The participation of the South African Parliamentary Delegation in COP28 is documented in this report. It highlights the active roles played by South African legislators by outlining their parliamentary responsibilities, bilateral interactions, and major events that they attended. In the Blue Zone of Expo City Dubai, there were noteworthy events such as panel discussions and presentations by the Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE). The delegation also participated in a joint parliamentary gathering of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) that was hosted in the Green Zone. During COP28, side events were also attended, such as those at the South African Pavilion and a progress report from the South African Team of Negotiators.

The latter part of the report highlights the key outcomes of COP28, and the ongoing challenges and concludes by providing recommendations for consideration by Parliament.



3 THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

Members of Parliament from both the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces:

- 1) Ms NN Mapisa-Nqakula, MP – Speaker of the National Assembly
- 2) Mr CT Frolick, MP – National Assembly (NA) House Chairperson: Committees, Oversight, and Information and Communications Technology
- 3) Mr AJ Nyambi, MP – National Council of Provinces (NCOP) House Chairperson
- 4) Ms PCP Majodina, MP – Chief Whip of the Majority Party
- 5) Ms TC Modise, MP – Chairperson: Select Committee on Land Reform, Environment, Mineral Resources and Energy
- 6) Ms N Gantsho, MP
- 7) Mr DW Bryant, MP
- 8) Mr MA Nhanha, MP

The Delegation was supported by:

1. Mr X George, Secretary to Parliament
2. Mr. D Sithole, Division Manager for the International Relations and Protocol
3. Mr M Mothapo, Divisional Manager for the Parliamentary Communications Services
4. Mr M Ngese: Research support (International Relations and Protocol)
5. Mr N Ginindza: Research support (Knowledge and Information Services)
6. Ms P Mfuyo: Office of the NA House Chairperson for Committees, Oversight, and Information and Communications Technology

4 INPUT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AT COP28

President C Ramaphosa spoke at the South African Pavilion during COP28. He started by commending Ms V Betani from the Keiskamma Art Project for their powerful presentation on climate change. He then underlined the importance of ambitious climate action to build the future we all desire. He mentioned that the climate fund, initially at \$8.5 billion, had grown to \$11 billion, but still fell short of what South Africa needs for its transition. He emphasised the need for deeper engagement with all stakeholders in this process.

While the President welcomed the agreement on loss and damage, he called the initial \$350 million in pledges insufficient compared to the needs of affected countries. He argued for proportional contributions based on each country's role in the climate crisis in line with the common but differentiated approach. More negotiations were needed to accelerate funding for transitions. President Ramaphosa also highlighted the importance of job creation and skills development during the transition to a low-carbon economy. He commended the work already happening in various sectors and reiterated South Africa's commitment to tackling its energy challenges. He concluded by reiterating the need for increased support for developing countries, deeper collaboration, and a just transition that creates a better future for everyone.



5 CLIMATE PARLIAMENT

The South African delegation held a sideline meeting with delegation of the Climate Parliament. This took place ahead of the 3 days webinar within the sidelines of COP 28. Climate Parliament is an international multi-partisan network of legislators combating climate change worldwide. The Climate Parliament conceived and helped to launch the Green Grids Initiative at COP 26 in Glasgow in 2021. It serves as a global secretariat for the initiative and have launched a number of new projects to support its core objective of accelerating the construction of the new infrastructure needed for a world powered by renewable energy. Climate Parliament is geared towards assisting Members of Parliament and staff on capacity building related programmes related to climate change within the context of just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

Through their delegation led by their Secretary General Climate Parliament expressed the objectives of requesting the South African Parliament to consider formally affiliate under this structure with the objective of benefiting from its programmes of capacity building on technical expertise and building awareness on climate change and other related programmes on climate finance.

The leadership of the South African delegation through the House Chairpers Hon Frolick, Hon Chief Whip of the Majority Party, appreciated the background relating to the work and relevance of Climate Parliament but further expressed concerns in terms of the composition of the membership of this organization and the manner in which there is not clear lines of accountability on Members of Parliament who participated in this organization previously. Hon Members further appreciated the need for capacity building in all parliaments that are always under resourced and how the programme the can help members raise awareness about climate change hazards in their constituencies, broader civic society by empowering MPs with climate adaptation related skills. In the context of climate change bill that is currently before the National Council of Provinces, capacity building of Members servicing different constituencies is imperative.

During the 3day webinar organized Climate Parliament, the focus of deliberations revolved around assessing the involvement of parliamentarians for the Paris Agreement, the impact of Climate Change and vulnerabilities of ecosystems, biodiversity and human communities as well Global Stocktake and the way forward for involvement parliamentarians. With regard to the Paris agreement, it was noted that in 2015 Climate plans were new, most countries were doing it for the first time. Many crafted by a single ministry maybe. Countries to present specific targets per sector, what will be achieved.

Paris agreement has been rectified by countries, countries should also put attention or more attention to monitoring it. Electoral cycles so many times affect this. UNSG Report on accountability in the system. There is no central mechanism to check where we stand on actual progress. Accountability systems need to be improved, is there a role on MP and national level



as a witness that things are actually being implemented. Brazil decided that democracy would be an entry point in the Paris Agreement for COP30 in Brazil.

Climate Parliament had played a pivotal role in ensuring the following;

- Mobilizing parliamentarians and supporting actions when those take place.
- Always gender balance and MP from all parties.
- 1% of the earth's surface is too hot for people to live in and grow crops. By 2070 that will be 19% of the world if things don't change.
- World electricity generation, coal is still growing.
- 1st message: urgency
- 2nd Hope: Paris Agreement, NDCs; there is a framework, a carbon budget.
- 5 trillion USD/year in subsidies for fossils even today. Almost 4% of global GDP goes to that.

Climate Impact

- Ocean absorbs 90% of CO₂ and temperature and it warms up, ocean acidification and temperature. More carbon absorbs less capacity to absorb. Feedback loops are called.
- All 3 GHG are reaching record high.
- This year 1.4C above pre-industrial levels. 1.5 is not one thing and then lost, it is a long-term average.
- Oceans are warming. Also, they are raising the sea level, warming is happening faster. Not the same rate all around the world.
- Energy is 73% of emissions, Agriculture sector is 18%.
- Data collection: impact data.
- MP main concerns were about communicating this to the population, how to make this relevant?

Global Stocktake

- GST key part of the Paris Agreement has to do 3 things:
 - Assess collective progress towards long-term goals 1.5 C global limit
 - Inform countries and new round of ambitions after 2025, countries need to come fwd with new targets then
 - Enhance international cooperation.

Nationally Determined Contributions

- Climate Action Tracker: tracking government targets and actions to keep them accountable and see how we progress to 1.5 C.
- Legally binding roadmaps long term are really helpful for forecasts.
- Only 38 countries plus EU27 submitted updates on NDCs since Glasgow.
- Six elements for 2035 NDC targets



- 1. Cut emissions substantially. Global emissions need to peak by 2025, be halved by 2030 and continue a steep decline. For most countries, this means substantial cuts from today's levels for 2035 targets
- 2. Align 2035 targets to a net-zero pathway and overachieve by 2030. 1025 will be the halfway point for many on the way to net-zero
- 3. Climate finance.
- 4. Domestic emissions reductions, not trees or carbon markets: priority is phase out fossil. Developed countries to support developing countries.
- 5. Start developing and implementing policies now.

6 GLOBE COP28 EVENTS

During COP28, the Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) International, a cross-party network of parliamentarians committed to enhancing governance for sustainable development, held its customary meetings. Notably, for the first time, world parliamentarians had a dedicated hub known as the Parliamentary Pavilion, facilitating meetings, idea exchange, deliberations, and learning from other stakeholders. The Pavilion's motto for COP28 was "*Parliaments Make COPs Count.*" This provided an opportunity for parliamentarians to establish alliances to elevate ambition, collaborate on the swift implementation of COP decisions, and ensure accountability for domestic action through their national parliaments.

Throughout the two weeks of COP28, the Parliamentary Pavilion served as a central gathering point for global parliamentarians, fostering caucusing, networking, peer learning, and the exchange of best practices. It aimed to have a more substantial and enduring impact on COP negotiations and outcomes. The cross-cutting themes were technology and innovation, inclusion, frontline communities and climate finance. The first two days were the World Climate Action Summit, before delving into themes such as Relief and Recovery, Gender Equality, Peace, Energy, Just Transition, Legislation, Education and Skills, and Accountability, among others. GLOBE live-streamed events and ran hybrid meetings with parliamentarians and stakeholders who were not physically present at the Parliamentary Pavilion. Besides the Members who were either presenters or panellists, other parliamentary delegates actively participated in sessions and made insightful inputs that were complementary or supplementary.

6.1 Panel Discussion on the Transformation of Global Food Systems

Hon. Gantsho outlined key aspects of South Africa's national food agenda. Emphasising international and regional agreements supporting food security, she highlighted the constitutional guarantee of the right to access sufficient food. The Government is implementing policies like the National Development Plan to stabilise food supply, particularly for small-holder farmers, and supports initiatives like the school nutrition programme and social grants to strengthen food access. As part of the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, the Government is prioritising sectors like agriculture through early warning systems for small-



scale farmers, climate-smart agriculture, and capacity building, among the measures being taken. Despite progress, climate change threatens achievements in reducing hunger. Hon. Gantsho stressed the crucial role of partnerships in improving food production, reducing input costs, and enhancing market access. Identifying gaps in the food policy environment, she emphasised the need for access to nutritious food, gender-sensitive interventions, expanded adoption of climate-smart agriculture, and transformation of the food system to minimise losses across the entire supply chain. Collaboration is seen as essential for inclusive agricultural transformation that serves both local and distant markets.

6.2 Panel Discussion on Legislating for a Resilient Future

Hon. Modise's contribution highlighted the urgency of climate action for South Africa, facing increasingly frequent and severe weather events. The country is actively tackling these challenges through policies like the National Climate Change Response Plan and the Just Transition Framework. However, a comprehensive legislative framework is crucial to harmonise efforts, set clear targets, and incentivise sustainable practices. She mentioned the Climate Change Bill, currently in parliament, and the Carbon Tax Act as key legislation for enhancing emissions reduction and adaptation. Nature-based solutions like wetland restoration and tree planting are also prioritised, alongside environmental programmes to combat invasive species. Hon. Modise acknowledged the significant financial challenge of a just energy transition. She called for simplified access to existing climate action funds and commended the progress made in the loss and damage fund. In conclusion, South Africa's path to a resilient future hinges on robust legislation, mobilising finance, and embracing nature-based solutions. Legislators play a critical role in shaping this framework, ensuring it aligns with development goals and addresses the climate crisis with urgency. By enacting effective measures, South Africa can secure its future and contribute to global efforts towards a sustainable planet.

6.3 Presentation on Just Transition

Hon. Frolick addressed a COP28 Global Legislators Organisation session under the topic titled "*Just Transition: A Parliamentary Perspective on South Africa's Progress towards Meeting the Goals of the Paris Agreement.*" He highlighted the escalating frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, emphasising their detrimental impact on livelihoods and the reversal of progress in addressing poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Key policy responses, including the Climate Change Bill, were discussed, with a focus on the imperative for blended finance to facilitate South Africa's transition to a low-carbon economy.

He was concerned that only \$11 billion of the \$86 billion needed for crucial initiatives like decommissioning coal power plants and economic diversification has been secured. More worrying was that 81% of the funds were loans raising concerns about future burdens on the fiscus. Mr Frolick highlighted the need for reskilling workers in affected mining towns to avert unintended consequences such as the creation of "ghost towns" and job losses (up to 48 500



by 2030). He reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to a 1.5°C temperature increase limit through the Just Energy Transition Implementation Plan, which involves decommissioning coal power stations.

Hon. Frolick stressed parliamentarians' oversight role in ensuring an equitable and inclusive transition, emphasising support for affected workers and communities. He urged collaboration with Southern African Development Community countries for renewable energy projects. Additionally, he advocated for the involvement of the education sector to drive expertise development for a greener economy. Hon. Frolick concluded by emphasising the prioritisation of support for vulnerable workers and communities before decommissioning coal power stations as part of the just transition.

6.4 Panel Discussion on Remaking Sustainable Trade for a Climate-Safe Future

Hon. Frolick's message at the "*Remaking Sustainable Trade for a Climate Safe Future*" panel was multifaceted. Firstly, he reiterated South Africa's commitment to collaborative climate action at the international level, highlighting its alignment with the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration and its recent passing of the first Climate Change Bill by the National Assembly. He touched on the global trade environment, reflecting South Africa's understanding of the need to integrate climate considerations into economic frameworks.

However, Hon. Frolick also raised critical concerns about developed countries' accountability and commitment. He decried broken promises and the glaring gap in responsibility for environmental damage inflicted on developing nations by industrialised economies. He pointed out the disparity between readily funding wars and neglecting climate finance pledges, urging developed countries to demonstrate the same urgency in honouring their commitments.

Finally, Frolick highlighted the crucial role of parliamentarians in scrutinising trade agreements and advocating for equity. He expressed strong opposition to the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) due to its potential negative impact on South African industries. He urged for the principle of equity and differentiated responsibilities to be upheld in implementing such measures, ensuring a just transition to a climate-safe future.

6.5 Panel Discussion on Code Red for Parliaments

Hon. Frolick expressed gratitude and acknowledged the urgency of the climate crisis, emphasising the bleak picture painted by the latest assessment report from the IPCC. Interactions with members of parliament and the EU delegation highlighted a push for greater urgency. The presence of the fossil fuel industry was noted, with a call for unambiguous language in addressing their role in the solution. Hon. Frolick discussed South Africa's stance, referencing a new integrated resource plan that provides a calculated transition from coal as a primary energy source to new power generation technologies with timelines set for 2030 and 2050. There was a concern about finding a balanced outcome in the climate negotiations to



avoid a problematic global trade regime. The importance of parliamentarians in climate and biodiversity policy was stressed, with a call for effective oversight and pressure on governments to meet commitments. The critical situation was underscored, urging a departure from business as usual, and a plea was made for a reconfiguration of parliamentary oversight systems for greater collaboration and public involvement.

7 INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION EVENT

The main Parliamentary Meeting, hosted at the heart of COP28, was a collaborative effort between the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UAE's Federal National Council. This full-day gathering took place on 6 December 2023 – dubbed Parliament Day, in the Green Zone of the Expo City Dubai. Notably, the Parliamentary Meeting marked an important step forward as it was held on-site. This location underscored the commitment of global parliaments to environmental concerns, symbolising their dedication to the climate agenda. This gathering convened global parliaments to facilitate knowledge sharing, international cooperation, and the exchange of best practices for climate action. The event aimed to create an inclusive platform for parliamentary dialogue, elevating parliamentary voices, and supporting urgent climate efforts both nationally and internationally, translating COP commitments into actionable realities. It signified progress towards aligning legislative actions with global climate goals, bolstering collaboration, and enhancing the role of legislatures in tackling environmental challenges. Furthermore, it offered an opportunity to raise the profile of parliamentary engagement within this major global process.

Mr. Saqr Ghobash, the Speaker of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates, initiated the event by extending a warm welcome to all attendees, particularly the 400 parliamentarians from 70 countries. Subsequently, Mr. Martin Chungong, the Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), delivered opening remarks and then handed the floor over to Ms. Christine Adam from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat for a special address. The succeeding sessions featured valuable contributions from Speakers of Parliaments and included a panel discussion covering diverse thematic areas. The final session concluded with the adoption of the Outcome Document, which urged parliaments to utilise their oversight and legislative roles to ensure the effective implementation of climate agreements and Nationally Determined Contributions. The parliamentary delegation participated in the meeting through the moderation of a session titled '*Setting the scene: Scientific insights, global progress and the call for enhanced ambition*' by Hon. Frolick.

During the Inter-Parliamentary Union's High-level Segment for Speakers of Parliament at COP28, Ms Mapisa-Nqakula, the Speaker of the National Assembly, reiterated South Africa's dedication to climate action as a crucial aspect of sustainable development. She highlighted legislative initiatives such as the Disaster Management Act and Climate Change Bill to address disaster-related challenges and strengthen climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.



The South African delegation welcomed the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund and the \$100 billion pledge for climate financing. Emphasising the need for parliamentary oversight she stressed the importance of monitoring fund utilisation and ensuring regular reporting for enhanced accountability. Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula underscored the critical role of multilateralism in global climate change efforts and called for collaborative actions to translate COP commitments into tangible realities.

The Speaker expressed concerns about the potential adverse effects of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism by the European Union (EU) on equity and the development of trade initiatives, particularly for developing and underdeveloped countries. Furthermore, she urged addressing conflicts such as Russia/Ukraine and Israel/Palestine to redirect focus towards climate-related challenges. Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula encouraged other parliamentary delegations at COP28 to complement governmental efforts and ensure inclusivity in climate change mitigation.

8 NEGOTIATION UPDATE BY THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENT

During the initial briefing by the country's negotiating team, varying perspectives emerged on global adaptation priorities, but consensus was reached on endorsing the adopted Loss and Damage Fund. The UAE committed \$100 million, with additional pledges totalling \$656 million at the time of the update. Negotiations were underway for the board positions of the L&D Fund, and the nomination process was scheduled for 2024. The US delegates were pushing for a name change, disputing the term "*Loss and Damage Fund*." The fund's headquarters location remains undecided.

Divergences persisted in the mitigation work programme, with no finalised decisions as delegates needed further consultations. Developed countries advocated for a new collective quantified goal on climate finance, binding high-income developing nations to contribute who were hesitant to agree. Developing countries rejected the Just Transition Pathway for its exclusive focus on mitigation, excluding adaptation.

Ongoing negotiations in the agriculture workstream were reported, with the draft document requiring further refinement. The initial text on the Global Stocktake faced disagreement, prompting its rescheduling for redrafting and reconsideration. Differences in Global Stocktake interpretations risked necessitating the revision of the Paris Agreement. The available support from the Paris Agreement was deemed non-compliant and insufficient to meet the substantial needs of developing countries. Agreement had not been reached on market and non-market climate finance mechanisms. Hon. Frolick shared insights on parliamentary delegates' participation in meetings, highlighting upcoming sessions and expressing concerns about climate finance and adaptation.



9 BILATERAL MEETINGS

The Parliament delegation further hold bilateral meetings with likeminded parliamentarians from the Brazil, Germany and the European Parliament delegation as well as the bilateral meeting with the South African High Commissioner in the United Arab Emirates. The key objective was to share experiences and best practices on issues of renewable energy, Just transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy and climate finance.

9.1 Bilateral Relations with Germany

The parliamentary delegation of Germany requested a bilateral exchange meeting with the parliamentarians of the South Africa delegation. In this bilateral exchange, the South African delegation was led by Hon C Frolick whilst the German delegation was led by Hon Lisa Badum, a Chairwoman of the Bundestag Climate Change Subcommittee (German Parliament). The objective of this bilateral exchange was to share experiences on matters of climate protection and energy policies.

In opening bilateral session Hon Frolick reflected on key strategies South Africa has in store to ensure climate protection. These included South Africa's Just Energy Investment Plan which seeks to ensure that a just transition to a low-carbon economy will benefit all South Africans by driving economic growth, creating jobs and increasing our energy security, while addressing the serious threat of climate change. South Africa's just energy transition investment plan for the period of 2023- 2027 sets out the scale of need and the investments required to achieve the decarbonisation commitments in our Nationally Determined contribution.

The Members of the South Africa delegation further reflected on the Presidential Climate Change as an independent, statutory multistakeholder body established by President Cyril Ramaphosa with the purpose of overseeing and facilitating a just and equitable transition towards a low-emission and climate-resilient economy. Its focus is to monitor progress towards mitigation and adaptation goals, as well as the achievement of a just transition linked to broader development objectives.

It was also indicating that the South African Parliament is in the process of finalizing its Climate Change bill which has been adopted by the National Assembly but is currently before the National Council of Provinces.

The German delegation appreciated the progress made by South Africa and further that it sees South Africa as the example of the power house in Africa in the Just Transition period. The German parliamentarians indicated that they have enacted a Climate Change bill and Commission in ensuring adherence to a low-carbon emission environment. The bill sets out penalties and put in place government tax laws.

Both countries agreed that there are constraints within the process of Just Transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy. These include the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism which is



initiated by the European Union and its impact on the developing countries. CBAM in an economy that is not fast growing will have detrimental effects.

The coal industry and green recovery remain poses particular constraints in the sense that South African mines remain a source of economy and employment to a larger population in the country. In our commitment to a Just energy transition, we believe that we have differentiated responsibilities and flexibilities in terms of moving from fossil fuel to renewable energies.

Article 6 of Paris agreement enforces that 6% must be spent on developing countries. German parliamentarians equally indicated that they intend to complete the Just transition by 2036 and operate on a full renewable energy. South African parliamentarians alluded to the fact with the vehicle industries of Volkswagen in South Africa, these provide fertile environment collaborate on a number of projects and South Africa can learn out of the experience of German.

9.2 Bilateral Relations with Brazil

The parliamentarians of the two delegations firstly began by reflecting the policy environment and legislative regime on how to ensure and enhance environmental policies. It was reflected that energy transition and clean energy does not necessarily mean decarbonisation, it requires an understanding of the importance of decarbonisation with the context of the previous conferences.

Developed countries as the biggest emitters must take more responsibility in the decarbonisation process. It was further reflected that 80% of the energy in South Africa emanates from coal. Therefore there is still a need to generate electricity to diversify energy mix.

The Brazilian parliamentarian indicated that they emerging from a difficult political transition where previous government administration reversed the gains of democracy and by extension adversely affected the environmental policy regime as well as the destabilization of the economy, wherein the previous President was climate change denier. He indicated that Brazil experienced a government authorized process of burning of the rain forest.

The incumbent President Lula emerged with an environmentalist discourse and the executive power of government is behind environmentalist policy. There is a political will to put in place institutions of government to ensure climate protection. South Africa further shared its experiences of the current Climate Change bill that is before the National Council of Provinces. Equally Brazil has initiated a similar process of approving a bill aimed at regulating carbon restrictions and there is a further mandate to work on climate change issues. Brazil has also embarked the educational roadshows with indigenous and traditional communities with the intention to educate them about the significance of caring for environment. Equally the Brazilians remain positive about their collaboration with BRICS Summit that was organized in South Africa and are continuously looking forward to work with the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation in South Africa to further strengthen these political ties.



9.3 Bilateral Relation with the European Union Delegation

The meeting between the European Parliament delegation and the South African Parliament delegation was convened on the 11 of December towards the conclusion of the COP 28 proceedings when everyone was awaiting in anticipation for the final text of the negotiation teams. The meeting further reflected on the outcomes of previous meetings between the European Parliament and the European Parliament under the auspices of the SA-EU Joint Interparliamentary Meeting.

Centrally to the discussions was the energy transition and the approach to Just transition with the impression of the COP 28 and the development on renewable projects, as well as the approach towards mitigation and adaptation. From the onset, the South African delegation expressed her concerns that the transition from fossil fuels to renewable should take everyone on board and ensure that it is people centered and ensure that everyone is skilled and can contribute sustainably in the green economy, failure to do that will pose socio-economic risks. This is due to the fact that coal is a center of employment in terms of jobs in many developing countries.

The European Parliament delegation underscore the fact that Just transition presents more opportunities and most investments need to go through renewable energy. The EU parliamentary delegation availed themselves through partnerships on sectors of the energy and trade related projects by diversifying trade.

The South Africa parliamentarians further articulated government positions on green recovery plan within the context of green job creation. Geopolitically it was observed that countries there is a dominant view from the developing world that there should be a decrease of emissions by 20% and that developed countries should take more responsibility. To this end, it was agreed that the final text must take into account the differentiation avoid avoid unilateral approach. In this regard both delegations agreed that parliaments should play an active role in ensuring that proactive oversight is exercised and ensure the implementation of the decision taken COP 28.

10 KEY OUTCOMES OF COP28

The outcomes of COP28, as outlined in this section, mark a significant leap forward in the global quest for effective climate action. This review underscores the pivotal role played by the First Global Stocktake in identifying critical gaps and prompting a call for stronger climate action plans by 2025. The landmark agreement reached at COP28, emphasizing a "*just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels*," signifies a substantial progression in climate negotiations. As detailed in the following key points, the conference also addresses the pressing issues of strengthening the Global Stocktake, boosting climate finance, supporting vulnerable countries, and elevating the roles of parliaments and civil society. While acknowledging the challenges ahead, COP28 provided a beacon of hope, showcasing a growing global consensus on the urgency of climate action and the potential for ambitious solutions to pave the way for a more sustainable future.



10.1 Accelerating Emissions Cuts and Phasing Out Fossil Fuels

- The landmark agreement at COP28 included language calling for a "just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels," marking a significant step forward from previous conferences.
- While not explicitly calling for an end to fossil fuel use, the agreement paves the way for countries to develop concrete plans to phase out coal and other fossil fuels in the coming years.
- Additionally, COP28 set a goal of tripling the world's renewable energy capacity and doubling its energy efficiency by 2030, setting an ambitious target for accelerating the transition to clean energy.

10.2 Strengthening the Global Stocktake and Raising Ambition

- The first Global Stocktake, a comprehensive assessment of global progress towards the Paris Agreement goals, was concluded at COP28.
- The stocktake highlighted the urgent need for increased ambition, as current plans put the world on track for a temperature rise well above the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement.
- In response, COP28 called on countries to submit new and more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2025, outlining their plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

10.3 Boosting Climate Finance and Supporting Vulnerable Countries

- COP28 saw a renewed commitment to providing financial support to developing countries for climate action and adaptation.
- Developed countries agreed to double their adaptation finance by 2025, providing much-needed resources to help vulnerable communities cope with the impacts of climate change.
- The conference also established a new "Loss and Damage" facility to provide compensation to countries already experiencing the severe consequences of climate change, a breakthrough for developing nations. The fund reached \$792 million in commitments by the last day of the conference.

10.4 Elevating the Role of Parliaments and Civil Society

- COP28 attracted over 400 parliamentarians and hundreds of civil society representatives, highlighting their growing role in climate action.
- The conference adopted a new "Parliamentary Framework," outlining ways for parliaments to support and hold governments accountable for their climate commitments and creating the enabling legislative and regulatory environment.
- Civil society organisations played a crucial role in pushing for ambitious outcomes at COP28, demonstrating the importance of public pressure in driving climate action.



10.5 Challenges and the Road Ahead

While COP28 delivered significant progress, several challenges remain. Implementation and accountability will be crucial in ensuring that the agreements reached in Dubai translate into real-world action. Moreover, closing the ambition gap and ensuring a just and equitable transition for all communities will require continued international cooperation and solidarity.

Despite these challenges, COP28 offers a glimmer of hope. The conference demonstrated a growing global consensus on the urgency of climate action and the need for ambitious solutions. With continued commitment and collaborative efforts, the outcomes of COP28 can pave the way for a more sustainable future for all.

11 PARLIAMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Continuous Monitoring and Reporting

- Parliament should use its legislative and oversight role to encourage governments to update and improve the NDCs, emphasising mitigation and emission reduction strategies, adaptation measures, and support for green economy initiatives, clean technology practices, and sustainable practices.
- Parliament should also monitor its operations to ensure the greening of parliamentary operations and the environment.
- Parliament should establish a dedicated Committee or mechanisms for continuous, forward-looking, and evidence-informed monitoring and reporting on the progress of biodiversity and climate-related legislation and policies to ensure transparency and accountability. The Committee should be capacitated to conduct thorough cost-benefit analyses for potential climate investments to prioritise initiatives with the highest impact per unit of funding.
- Given the constraints of USD 11.6 billion, that is mostly loans, and national fiscal limitations, Parliament's Finance and Appropriation Committees should implement robust mechanisms for strict scrutiny of climate finance spending to ensure maximum value for money, minimise unnecessary debt acquisition, and optimise resource utilisation.
- Parliament should consider reviewing legislation to ensure that climate financial commitments are endorsed by Parliament before being agreed to on behalf of the country. The parliamentary climate finance oversight mechanisms could help manage or prevent debt traps and monitor the budgeting and spending of funds received from developed countries.

11.2 Increase Support for Climate Finance

- Parliament's Environment Committees should ensure the alignment of national climate policies with international commitments, available finances, and domestic priorities and capabilities.
- Through its sectoral Committees, Parliament should ensure that Departments incorporate climate action into their annual, medium-term and long-term plans.



- In various fora, Parliament should advocate for sufficient funds, urge developed nations to fulfil their financial commitments, and support the reform of global financial institutions to enhance the accessibility of climate finance, especially for developing countries.
- While the processing of the Climate Change Bill is being prioritised in the NCOP, the Government should ring-fence resources to enable its implementation when regulations are finalised. The funding should consider the urgency and scale of the required interventions, particularly at district and municipal levels.
- Parliament's Finance and Appropriation Committees should ensure that Government investigate innovative debt management strategies, such as debt-for-climate swaps, to unlock additional resources without overburdening national budgets with loans.

11.3 Cross-Sectoral Collaboration

Parliamentary Committees could foster stronger partnerships with provincial legislatures, businesses, civil society, and other non-party stakeholders to implement and monitor their climate strategies and plans and to align them with the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Breakthroughs.

11.4 Promote Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Climate Action

Parliament could adopt and oversee laws and policies that advance gender equality and human rights in climate action, and ensure the participation and representation of women, youth, rural communities, people living with disabilities and other vulnerable and underrepresented groups in decision-making processes and implementation.

11.5 Accelerate the Energy Transition and Decarbonisation of Key Sectors

Parliament could call for a revision of legislation and regulations to support the rapid shift to renewable energy and energy efficiency and to reduce emissions from industry, transport, buildings, and land use. Parliament should actively oversee the ongoing Just Transition across multiple sectors, extending its focus beyond the primary emphasis on the energy sector. It is crucial to support the embrace of low-carbon and nature-based solutions while also facilitating a well-planned and systematic transition away from fossil fuel-dependent transportation and coal-based power generation.

11.6 Leading by Example

Parliament should lead by example in the reduction of carbon footprint by implementing sustainable practices in operations, facilities, and supply chains in line with the IPU Parliaments for the Planet campaign.



Report to be adopted