



CLARA – CANLA and other Organizations Statement to UNFCCC Secretariat, Official Presidency of COP 25 – Chile Government and Government of Spain.

Background

COP 25 was scheduled to be a Latin American one, originally to be hosted by Brazil. However, consistent with his position on climate change and ongoing disregard for the voices of indigenous peoples and civil society, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro refused the invitation.

Chile then offered to host COP 25, and to assume the official Presidency. One of the main goals of this COP was to ensure the open and transparent participation of civil society. Representatives of CS were included the COP25 committee, La Sociedad Civil por la Acción Climática SCAC (in Spanish Civil Society for Climate Action) as a civil society environmental summit space was created and a “Green Zone”, open to everyone and to be located directly next to the official negotiating space, was designed.

Despite the difficult political situation in Chile, at the COP25 committee meeting held on October 25, CSOs nevertheless argued that the conference should remain in Santiago as an opportunity to recognize and openly discuss the environmental issues which are central to the socio-economic problems that Chile is experiencing. Following that meeting, the Chilean government confirmed that COP25 would continue as planned. On October 30, however, with no participation or consultation from CSOs, the government announced that it would not host COP 25 in Santiago. Two days later, the UNFCCC confirmed that it would be held in Madrid.

CLARA, CANLA and other Organizations reaction

CLARA (Climate Land Ambition and Rights Alliance), CANLA (Climate Action Network Latin America), Asociación Ambiente y Sociedad, La Ruta del Clima and MOCICC (Movimiento Ciudadano frente al Cambio Climático) see this decision as an example of a complete lack of transparency and a barrier to the effective participation of CSOs and indigenous peoples in climate change processes and actions. There is a total absence of empathy and recognition towards the efforts, time and resources already invested by NGOs, local and regional, youth, women and workers’ groups, to create openings and devise strategies to make the international community aware of the socio-environmental realities of climate change in Chile and Latin America.

This situation also highlights the national and regional circumstances that Latin American countries confront in their fight against climate change. The political instability of the region is a reality which has been caused partly by deep socioeconomic and environmental inequities developed by an extractive development model that generates pressure on territories, local communities, indigenous peoples, citizens, resources and climate. CLARA, CANLA and other organizations are highly concerned that processes such as NDC planning and development and decarbonization are taking place against this backdrop, where human rights, participation and transparency are not always guaranteed. As climate impacts become more widespread and unpredictable, these tensions and socio-environmental problems will increase, such as the IPCC has already mentioned in its reports on Land and 1.5 Degrees.

The relocation of COP 25 to Madrid is welcomed by CLARA, CANLA and other organizations as a positive indicator of governments and the UNFCCC continuing their efforts on tackling climate change. Nevertheless, many concerns and questions arise. Therefore we request to UNFCCC Secretariat, the presidency of COP25 in head of Chile and the Government of Spain, actions and support on these topics:

- SCAC events and the Peoples Summit will still be held in Santiago. The integration of these meetings and events at the official COP must be guaranteed as a way to recognize efforts to date and as an opportunity to improve participation of civil society and indigenous peoples regardless of their location.
- The relocation implies a rescheduling of flights. For many organizations this will make their participation impossible. The UNFCCC must ensure that airline and hotel reservations are cancelled and reimbursed, flight change fees are waived and visa arrangements are expedited to ensure the participation of civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities from Latin America, Africa and Asia.
- Signing and respecting the Escazú Agreement is an opportunity for Latin American governments to show their real commitment to combating climate change and their respect for civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities who are fighting for the environment.
- COP 25 must remain as a Latin American one. Indigenous peoples' circumstances and history must be respected and taken into account under the present circumstances.
- Governments must remember the urgency of taking real actions to tackle GHG emissions and of adapting to climate change on their territories, not only in relocating a meeting. What needs to be done to tackle climate change has been already identified; so discussions and meetings on this subject are not and should not be the focus of this process.
- We hope this situation helps the international community to understand and engage in the reality faced by countries in the Global South. This should be an opportunity to put into practice the Paris Agreement's principle of "Common but differentiated responsibilities" of countries, and the SDG's "Leaving no one behind".