

PRESS RELEASE

COP28 President-Designate calls on international community to deliver on climate finance at African climate ministerial meeting

- COP28 President-Designate Dr Sultan Al Jaber has addressed the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) in Ethiopia, in which he recognised the African continent's performance and potential as a leading force in the energy transition and the need for increased finance.
- He repeated the COP28 Presidency's call to the international community to unite on international climate finance, referring to progress at a recent meeting of major global economists in Abu Dhabi and announcing a key ministerial event with climate vulnerable countries during pre-COP.
- In addition to his remarks Dr. Sultan Al Jaber held bilateral meetings with African leaders to discuss the COP28 climate finance and energy transition agenda, calling on all to share their priority outcomes and key contributions for COP28.

Addis Ababa, 17 August 2023: COP28 President-Designate Dr. Sultan Al Jaber has addressed the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), sharing his vision and priorities for COP28, especially the need for adaptation financing and acceleration of the energy transition.

A key partner to COP28, AMCEN unites environment ministers from across the continent and provides political guidance and coordinates policy positions among its member states, which include all 54 African countries. Ethiopia will chair AMCEN in 2024.

In his speech, Dr. Al Jaber highlighted the need for urgent action to put the world back on track to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and keep the ambition of 1.5 within reach.

“With just over 100 days before the world gathers in Dubai for COP28, both the science and common sense are telling us that our collective response to climate change is nowhere near good enough.”

The COP President Designate not only recognized Africa's position at the frontline of climate impacts but also its performance and potential as a leading force in the energy transition.

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He said, "When it comes to transitioning to an energy system free of unabated fossil fuels, Africa has many lessons for the rest of us. Here in Ethiopia, almost 100 per cent of the country's energy comes from renewable hydro power. [...] across this great continent, a young and growing population is seizing the potential of other clean energy sources from wind to solar and choosing low carbon economic growth."

However, he also acknowledged that a chronic lack of available, accessible and affordable climate finance is holding back Africa's potential, noting that barely one tenth of global climate finance finds its way to the continent.

As such, Dr. Al Jaber highlighted the urgent need to reform international climate finance. He said, "First, the international community must come through with the 100-billion-dollar pledge they made over a decade ago. I will continue to press donor countries to ensure delivery no later than this year [...] Next, the entire global financial architecture from IFIs to MDBs needs modernizing. They were built for the second half of the last century. They urgently need to be upgraded to meet the needs of this one."

He was also clear on his call to action on Loss and Damage: "we must operationalize the fund and funding arrangements for Loss and Damage, and early pledges are vital to ensure we live up to the commitments made at Sharm El Sheikh".

In making these remarks, Dr. Al Jaber referred to a meeting of the Independent High-Level Expert Group (IHLEG) that united world leading economists in Abu Dhabi for two days of talks on the 15 and 16 August.

The meeting, which was attended by leading figures including IHLEG co-chairs Lord Nicholas Stern and Dr. Vera Songwe as well as representatives from the World Bank, IMF, ECF and IFC, the COP28 and COP27 Presidencies, set out crucial next steps to reform international climate finance. A detailed report, including a clear roadmap on how to implement recommendations, will be presented to world leaders at COP28.

Looking to the future and another significant moment to drive forward 'fixing climate finance', Dr. Al Jaber also announced that the COP28 UAE Presidency will co-host the third Climate and Development Ministerial alongside the UK, Malawi and Vanuatu governments in the UAE on 29 October during the formal 'pre-COP' period.

The meeting – which will focus on advancing access to, and delivery of, adaptation finance – will be led by climate and development ministers from LDC and AOSIS states and will also be attended by ministers and leaders from ally countries, International Financial Organizations (IFIs), multilateral development banks (MDBs), Climate Funds and leading multinational organizations.

During his visit to Ethiopia, Dr. Al Jaber also held bilateral meetings with African leaders to discuss the COP28 climate finance and energy transition agenda, including with Alioune Ndoye, Minister of Environment, Development and Ecological Transition of Senegal; Barbra Creecy, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental Affairs of South Africa and Collins Nzovu, Minister of Green Economy and Environment of Zambia.

He also particularly praised Ethiopia's afforestation and reforestation-focused Green Legacy Initiative, which has created over 767,000 green jobs under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali's leadership.

Dr. Al Jaber's visit to the African region and speech at the AMCEN summit is an important moment in mobilizing African leaders ahead of COP28 and preparing the ground for strong outcomes on international climate finance, including loss and damage.