

COP27 Concludes While the Environmental Crisis Continues

Although a fund to address “damage and loss” was established, still no real commitments were made by the capitalist states to halt environmental degradation and transition to renewable energy sources

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There were high expectations for the United Nations Climate Conference held in the Egyptian seaside resort of Sharm-el-Sheikh.

COP27 took place on the African continent amid months of preparations by governments, non-governmental and mass organizations across the region and beyond.

Nonetheless, when the conference ended on November 20, there were no definitive deadlines established for the significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions nor the adoption of plans to rapidly move towards alternative forms of power generation, agricultural and industrial production. The underdeveloped countries and the western imperialist states have different and often contradictory sets of priorities as it relates to economic development.

Reparations and Reconstruction

Many states within the 55-member African Union (AU), based in neighboring Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, are demanding that the governments in Western Europe and North America which have gained their wealth and political dominance through the exploitation of large areas of the globe, should compensate their formerly enslaved, colonized and neo-colonized peoples. The ruling class within the United States and other imperialist countries are not willing to make any promises since the level of “loss and damage” is almost incalculable.

Other geo-political regions in the Caribbean, Central America, South America and the Asia-Pacific are taking a similar position. Under the current world economic system characterized by the unequal distribution of wealth and military power, the U.S., European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries are not about to relinquish their status without a monumental struggle. This viewpoint on the part of the western capitalist

governments was reflected in arguments advanced at COP27 which attempt to obfuscate the central questions of responsibility and reparations for the current global environmental crisis.

It is undisputed that the main emitters of greenhouse gases are to be found in the imperialist states. The main source of pollutants emanates from the numerous military bases of the Pentagon and NATO which are sprawled across several continents.

The most newsworthy report to emerge from the concluding document was the announcement that a “loss and damage” fund was being set up in order to address the demands of the developing states. However, in reading the actual statement related to the “loss and damage” fund, more questions than answers come to the fore.

In a report on the COP27 conference [published by](#) the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) noted that:

“While the negotiated text recognized the need for financial support from a variety of sources, no decisions have been made on who should pay into the fund, where this money will come from, and which countries will benefit. The issue has been one of the most contentious on the negotiating table. Adapting to the climate crisis — which could require everything from building sea walls to creating drought-resistant crops — could cost developing countries anywhere from US\$160-US\$340 billion annually by 2030. That number could swell to as much as US\$565 billion by 2050 if climate change accelerates, found UN Environment Programs (UNEP’s) 2022 Adaptation Gap Report.”

Beyond not making a clear statement about what is needed for the developing states to improve weather conditions, agricultural sustainability and to end military occupations directly or indirectly by the Pentagon-NATO forces, there were no firm guidelines spelled out for acknowledging past obligations to end production methods and forms of international relations which are damaging the planet and its people.

During the summit another major news story was the population of the earth reaching 8 billion people. Various geo-political regions such as South Asia and the AU member-states were noted for their rapid population growth. As a result of these developments, the western imperialist states will eventually be forced to adapt to the realities of a world bound to escape their spheres of influence.

The UNEP report quoted earlier also says:

“The final agreement did mention ‘the urgent need for deep, rapid and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions’ to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the most ambitious goal of the Paris Agreement. Yet there were concerns that no real progress was made on raising ambition or cutting fossil fuel emissions since COP26. That was considered bad news for a rapidly warming world. The Emissions Gap Report 2022, released by UNEP just before COP27, painted a bleak picture, finding that without rapid societal transformation, there is no credible pathway to a 1.5°C future. For each fraction of a degree that temperatures rise, storms, droughts and other extreme weather events become more severe.”

Not acting in a revolutionary manner towards these predictions endangers the futures of the majority of the 8 billion people now living around the world. Therefore, the developing states

with their majority working class, farmers and youth must take matters into their own hands to ensure that imperialism does not do further damage to the planet.

Imperialism and the Environmental Crisis

Since the first U.S.-led war on Iraq in 1991, the region of West Asia and its environs have been plunged into instability and societal disruptions. Later in 2003, when a complete Pentagon occupation of Iraq was carried out, there was the further dislodging of millions of people creating the conditions for the eruption of other wars and the expansion of U.S.-NATO troops.

The continuing occupation of Palestine by the U.S.-funded Israeli regime not only drains much needed resources needed to feed, house and clothe billions around the world, it is the source of the forced exile of the Palestinians, Syrians, Lebanese and Egyptians from their homelands. Successive U.S. administrations and their allies have supplied tens of billions of dollars in direct aid and assistance to the Israeli regime while the Palestinians and others in the region are subjected to the institutional discrimination and colonial impunity of Tel Aviv.

A program of resource extraction, political interference and military occupation has perpetuated the underdevelopment of Africa and other geo-political regions of the Global South since the conclusion of World War II and the independence movements which won liberation since the late 1940s. The nexus of economic and military hegemony exercised by the U.S. and NATO countries has reached its capacity to maintain compliance.

Yet, the impact of climate change has become far greater on the countries Asia, Africa and Latin America. There is the increasing frequency of extreme weather events which causes damage to human lives and societal institutions.

One indication of the changing political landscape was the presence of Brazil President-elect Lula da Silva. The former leader won a run-off election in October against ultra-right incumbent Joao Bolsonaro who had declared war on the indigenous and African people of Brazil during his administration.

Lula arrived at COP 27 with much fanfare. People greeted him with the anticipation that environmental policy would change under his leadership in Brazil. Lula addressed the UN gathering at Sharm-el-Sheikh by emphasizing the need to engage in the major international questions of the period. He invited the UN Climate Conference to be held in the Amazon in Brazil in 2025.

[Lula's speech](#) at COP27 expressed his mandate from the electorate to reverse the current disastrous course embarked upon by his predecessor:

“There is no climate security for the world without a protected Amazon. We will spare no efforts to have zero deforestation and the degradation of our biomes by 2030. The planet is at every moment alerting us that we need one another to survive. However, we ignore these alerts. We spend trillions of dollars on wars that bring destruction and death, while 900 million people in the world don't have something to eat.”

This is the sentiment of the majority of people throughout the world today. However, to achieve this objective it will be necessary to defeat the forces of imperialism and its surrogates in order for the will of the people to be realized.

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