

# **Africa in Global Climate Change Governance: Analyzing Its Position and Challenges**

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## **Abstract**

Climate change has emerged as a major global issue that affects all nations and has become a phenomena requiring global governance in the modern globalized world. Though the African contribution to the increase Greenhouse Gas (GHG) is very small, climate change is a concern of African countries. This paper is aimed to analyze the African position and challenges in the governance of climate change. Nonetheless, there are opportunities created for adaptation and mitigation, the implementation of these measures is constrained by lack of financial, institutional and human capacities. Accordingly, the Africans position in the international system and lack of the capacities required for meaningful engagement leads to a challenge to participate effectively in global climate change negotiations. Despite numerous internal difficulties facing the African countries in climate governance and negotiations, this paper argues that African countries have shown an improvement in response, and willingness to cooperate and participate compared to previous times. Especially, in recent years, African states have managed to negotiate more effectively, both individually and as a group.

*Keywords: Africa Group of Negotiators, negotiations, climate governance, climate change.*

## **Introduction**

The issue of environment truly emerged onto the international political agenda at the 1972 UN-run Stockholm conference; however, it was only in the latter decades of the twentieth century that environmental problems came to be recognized as more than local or even regional. Though environment in general and climate change, in particular, is a global problem that requires global solutions, its impacts require the active involvement of multiple national and local-level stakeholders in shaping and implementing the solutions. Accordingly, global climate governance, or the purposeful mechanisms and measures aimed at steering social systems towards preventing, mitigating, or adapting to the risks posed by climate change (IPCC, 2014), has come to be one of the central themes of debate and concern among different academic, political and economic domains. Climate change governance takes into account principles of accountability, management and institutional strengthening which are applied when tackling the various challenges posted by climate change. It also includes a wide range of steering mechanisms ranging from informal cooperation between different institutions and actors to hierarchical forms of regulation. Therefore, climate change governance can be described as a wide variety of

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coordinating methods contributing to the adaptation and mitigation of climate change (Knieling, & Filho, 2013).

Unlike the recent trend, climate change has had little relevance to development policy-makers or practitioners, and has been viewed largely as an environmental concern, and development approaches have been given less attention within the climate change community. According to Makina (2013), climate change will interact at all scales with other trends in global environmental and natural resource concerns, including water, soil and air pollution, health hazards, disaster risk, and deforestation. Moreover, as Madzwamuse (2010) mentioned, due to its predicted impacts on biodiversity, rural livelihoods and national and global economies, since the early 1990s, climate change has emerged as a critical development issue. Similarly, climate change is a concern of African countries; however, they might reach compliance but agree differently on the global provisions towards addressing the global environmental problems. Studies have shown that African contribution to the increase in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) is very small when compared to that of other more developed continents; however, they are definitely victims of the climate change consequences. Recently, this has been verified at the Lima Climate Conference by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon (2014) who stated that “Climate change affects us all, but it does not affect us all equally. The poorest and most vulnerable, those who have done the least to contribute to global warming, are bearing the brunt of the impact today.” This paper is primarily concerned with climate change governance and humbly tries to examine and analyze the position of the African group in international climate politics by examining what the African group has been saying regarding climate politics. The emerging literatures on the topic was used to develop some preliminary hypotheses on the conditions under which all could expect to enhance the African position on global climate politics. Accordingly, the paper found that in Africa, climate change creates opportunities to support climate change response in adaptation and mitigation. However, Africa has policy and funding challenges for both adaptation and mitigation. African countries have become much more proactive during the UNFCCC negotiations since the early 2000s. A number of quantitative measures were utilized including submissions, delegation size, and so on, and qualitative assessments by those within the AGN itself and beyond demonstrating that participation has increased substantially.

In this paper, an introduction is followed by a section that briefly reviews the nexus between climate change and development in Africa. The third section presents the empirical assessment of the position and challenges of Africa in international climate change politics. This section has two sub-sections. The first will focus on the African initiatives and their demands, the role of different institutions contributing to the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN's) work and the African common position negotiation strategies. The second sub-section will focus on the 1) African position in mitigation policy debate and responses; 2) African group's position before the Lima climate conference; 3) African group's position at the Lima climate conference; and 4) the challenges facing the African group during the negotiations. A final section concludes by summarizing the main findings and pointing out future implications.

## **Climate Change and Development in Africa**

Here is an attempt to address the relationship between climate change and development in the African perspective. Until recently, climate change has little relevance to development policy-makers or practitioners. According to Madzwamuse, M. (2010), climate was viewed largely as an environmental concern and development approaches have been given less attention within the climate change community, which instead favors natural science approaches focusing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. However, climate change has emerged as a critical development issue since the early 1990s due to its predicted impacts on biodiversity, rural livelihoods and national and global economies. In addition, it was found in the recent initiatives to strengthen links between climate change and development communities, and experts can no longer ignore the fact that most climate change impacts will fall predominantly on the world's poorest people. Recently, this has been verified at the Lima Climate Change Conference, 2014, by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon.

There have been three conferences held on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA) and each conference presents an opportunity for stakeholders to deliberate on Africa's development in the context of climate change. These conferences have the theme of advancing knowledge, policy and practice on climate change and development. The third conference was held in 2013, and created forums for dialogue that raised awareness of the importance of climate change, its impacts on development, and the nexus between science, policy and practice. The findings of the conference showed the need to mainstream climate change through development policy planning, programming and implementation. Accordingly, the conference did not pass without mentioning the imperative which is clear and shows that climate change is a threat and an opportunity (CCDA\_III, 2013) .

### **Analyzing the Position and Challenges of the African Group in the Global Climate Change Politics**

This paper argues that African countries have shown an improvement in response, and willingness to cooperate and participate in climate control compared to previous times. This section will have three main parts: 1) The position of the African group in mitigation policy debate and responses; 2) The position of the African group in global climate change negotiations; and 3) The challenges facing the African group during the negotiations. Before engaging in looking at these issues, it is necessary to review the regional initiatives and institutional contributions to the African Group of Negotiators (AGNs) and some of the African demands related to climate change.

#### **African Initiatives on Climate Change**

For more than a decade, the world has been negotiating global agreements under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). At the UNFCCC, a number of actors, groups and platforms are instrumental in the development of a consolidated African position. A Conference of the Parties, or COP, to negotiate climate change has been held annually since 1995. Though AU adopted its own Declaration on Climate Change and Development in

2007, the first time that it clearly expressed a common position was at the Copenhagen COP in 2009 when it put forward the ‘African Common Position on Climate Change’ that set the mandate for African negotiators (AU/AMCEN, 2009). This position was built on the core concept of ‘environmental justice’ and stated that adaptation is the highest priority for Africa, since the continent’s greenhouse gas emissions are so small. The AU has followed various strategies and cooperated with a variety of actors on climate change issues, such as multiculturalism, bilateralism and regionalism (Ramsamy, Knoll, Knaepen, & Wyk, 2014).

### **The Role of Different Institutions Contributing to the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN’s) Work**

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), initially formed in 1985, is a key platform involved in the process of presenting the African common position to the UNFCCC. AMCEN has played a key role in terms of improving coordination of the common African position. It has worked towards a common framework in which all climate change programs in Africa are merged. For example, the African common position of 2009 was updated at an AMCEN session and endorsed by the AU. AMCEN’s African Group of Experts, the technical segment of AMCEN, has been instrumental in this respect. AMCEN provides technical input as well as political oversight to the AGN. The Conference of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) is the highest continental body for approving and endorsing the common position. However, CAHOSCC is also fragmented, which has impeded smooth functioning. Other key partners in supporting the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN) are the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) that have provided technical support to the AGN during the preparation for the UNFCCC negotiations. In order to support its capacity, the AGN is supported by other technical agencies such as the UN. Compared to the above-mentioned institutions which enable consultation and coordination at the continental level to prepare for negotiations and develop the common position, there are regional and sub-regional initiatives that have proven fragile in several instances of negotiating positions. In turn, incoherence in their respective negotiating positions has generally weakened the position of the AGN in the UNFCCC negotiations (Ramsamy et al., 2014).

### **The African Common Position and Some of Their Demands**

As Roger and Belliethathan (2016) discussed in their article, the African common position on the African Environment and Development was announced at the Second Regional African Ministerial Conference for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Cote D’Ivoire in 1991. The 1991 conference, which marked the first occasion in which all African states officially addressed the issue of climate change as a group, established many principles that would become commonplace in African environmental diplomacy. For example, it asserted the priority of economic development, improvement of quality of life and the reduction in poverty over environmental considerations. It maintained that food and energy security were vital concerns for African governments and affirmed their sovereignty over the use

of natural resources. In order to achieve sustainable development, the common position called for large financial transfers, transfers of technology and capacity building programs. According to Hoste (2010), the process of the African position started in 2006. In addition, their common position was initiated in 2008 in Algiers followed by the Nairobi Declaration in 2009 that resulted in the common position. However, they made the key demands of the African Group based on the Common Position of the Committee of the African Heads of State on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) (Hoste, 2010). These include:

- a) Financial compensation for natural, economic and social resources that have been lost and the historical responsibility of developed countries on climate change in that respect (the financial commitment of developed countries should be at least 1.5% of their global GDP).
- b) The UNFCCC principle of common but differentiated responsibilities should be respected.
- c) Methodological demand: the African group wanted to keep the two track negotiations. This meant they wanted to keep the distinction between the Kyoto Protocol and the Convention.
- d) That developed countries needed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2020. By 2050 the GHG-emissions of developed countries should be at least 80% to 95% below 1990 levels. In order to achieve the lowest level of stabilization assessed by the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report. Furthermore, Hoste (2010) noted that the African common position explicitly stipulated that they will not accept any delay by developed countries to deeply cut their GHG emissions and asked for support for Africa to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change.

### **The Position of the African Group in Mitigation Policy Debate and Responses**

Under the African ministerial level conference, the climate change debate has primarily focused on adaptation rather than mitigation as historically Africa's contribution to global GHG emissions has been small - approximately 1.75% of global energy, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 1950-2000; and 3.85% of annual GHG emissions in 2000 (Winkler & Ziplies, 2009) (AMCEN, 2011). Therefore, understandably the focus amongst practitioners, particularly in the context of the UNFCCC climate negotiations, has been on attracting finance to build Africa's adaptive capacity. Whilst as a non-Annex 1 region, it is excluded from any quantified mitigation commitments under the UNFCCC, and therefore, less emphasis is placed on mitigation. Since Africa needs to develop economically to meet its priority of eradicating poverty, developing along a cleaner energy path, and moving towards low carbon development, mitigation will be necessary in order to maintain economic competitiveness in a global economy. The Africa Group has called on developing countries to undertake several key actions relating to mitigation. These include:

- 1) A science-based aggregate target for developed countries to ensure to individually or collectively reduce emissions in accordance with science, equity and historical responsibility;
- 2) Individual commitments that are negotiated among all Parties to ensure developed countries make adequate and equitable contributions to the Convention's objective;

- 3) Individual commitments that are binding in international law, not merely statements of intention, or commitments that are binding merely in national law;
- 4) Effective reporting on achievement of commitments;
- 5) Review and continuing commitments by developed countries during second and subsequent commitment periods; and
- 6) Mechanisms for compliance to ensure that developed countries fulfill their legally binding commitments in practice.

On the whole, the African Group insists on the elaboration of a detailed and clear work program for the Kyoto Protocol with the aim of adopting a final decision for the second commitment period in Durban in 2011. On policy approaches on issues relating to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), African country parties are willing to undertake the following mitigation measures commensurate with their respective capabilities and national circumstances: a) Reduce emissions from deforestation; b) Reduce emissions from forest degradation; c) Conserve forest carbon stocks; and d) Sustain management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (AMCEN, 2011).

### **The Position of the African Group in the Global Climate Change Negotiations**

Before engaging in examining the position of the African countries, it is necessary to understand how the African countries participate in the international climate negotiations. Therefore, according to Hoste (2010), one of the most important structural features of multilateral negotiations is the emergence of coalitions. Moreover, the analysis of the capacity of developing countries in multilateral negotiations would be incomplete without a section on the coalitions. African countries negotiate through the Group of 77 + China (G77), LDCs and through the Africa Group. South-South cooperation is particularly visible with the UNFCCC negotiations, with the most important developing country coalition being the G77. In addition, African countries participate in international negotiations through country groups and delegations that often negotiate in their own capacity and within these coalitions. According to Roger (2013), Africa's climate negotiations are being strongly led by the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN). One country is selected to chair the group for a period of two years and in January 2014, the Republic of the Sudan became its chair. The AGN's structure consists of all African Member States' senior officials, experts and negotiators in the UNFCCC negotiations with the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) providing political oversight to the group. It represents the region in the international climate change negotiations with a common and unified voice. Since the Earth Summit in 1992, African states have participated in coalitions such as the G77, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and OPEC, and they have worked together as a regional group through the African Group of Negotiators (AGN).

From the literature we can understand that scholars, including Ramsamy, Knoll, Knaepen and Wyk (2014) as well as Roger (2013) and Dongo (2011) argued to the effective participation of Africa as a group in the international climate change negotiations. As Dongo argued, in the interest of a fair and equitable global response to climate change, Africa's active and influential

role in the climate change negotiations must be sustained. As African participation continues to grow, strategies and resources need to be made available to create a space for many that will help build a much stronger African voice. Therefore, the reasons for the effective participation as a group in international climate change negotiations include (IISD, 2014):

- 1) Over the past five years, African negotiators have been able to considerably improve their access to material resources, allowing them to increase the size and quality of their delegations.
- 2) African negotiators have sought resources from a variety of international donors and multilateral institutions. For example, at the request of the chair of the AGN, the African Development Bank (AfDB) started to provide funding in 2008 for African delegates to participate in the UNFCCC negotiations.
- 3) African states have improved their access to information and expertise.
- 4) African delegates have been able to negotiate with a much clearer mandate from African leaders in recent years.

Furthermore, as other scholars such as Ramsamy, Knoll, Knaepen and Wyk (2014) argue, Africa in recent years shows a consistent effort to formulate common positions ahead of key moments in the global agenda. Creating the African Common Positions involves both technical and political input from various African actors, organizations and platforms. African negotiators often seek to form international partnerships to push their agenda forward. Accordingly, from the discussions, we can understand that African's internal challenges, especially before the last five years, were the cause for its ineffective participation in global climate change politics. However, recently it is easier to agree with those who argue that the African group is showing effective participation in international climate negotiations.

#### **African group's position before the Lima climate conference.**

Though the 1991 Cote d'Ivoire's regional ministerial conference marked the first occasion in which all African states officially addressed the issue of climate change as a group, until 2006, African states had submitted more than 20 submissions and agenda items. Beginning around 2005, however, as the effects of Africa's lack of influence became particularly apparent, the AGN slowly started to have a greater impact on the UNFCCC negotiations. From 2007 onwards, African countries submitted less than 40 agenda items. Furthermore, in 2011 at COP17 in Durban, they put forward about 100 submissions and agenda items, a number roughly equivalent to the total submitted between 1991 and 2005. Indeed, after 2009, the number of AGN submissions even dwarfed those of the G77/China, reversing a trend that had prevailed since the UNFCCC's early years when the G77/China dominated (Roger & Belliethathan, 2016). As Roger and Belliethathan (2016) and Ramsamy, Knoll, Knaepen and Wyk (2014) recently discussed, African participation in the UNFCCC has improved as demonstrated in the following conferences:

- *At the 2006 COP12:* COP12, which took place in Nairobi in 2006, proved to be a turning point. As the first COP to take place in Sub-Saharan Africa, the meeting offered an ideal

opportunity to call attention to the region's concerns in front of a global audience. It also helped to raise the issue's salience among African leaders. As a result, more resources were devoted to the talks, and African negotiators made significant efforts to develop a common position that would adequately reflect Africa's urgent needs. The meeting enabled Africa's negotiators to reach a consensus on several issues, not only on adaptation and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), but also deforestation, climate finance and technology transfer. As a result of the AGN's efforts, the conference achieved two important outcomes meant to address some of the major issues it had identified. The first was the Nairobi Work Program on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change which sought to improve capacity building related to adaptation decision-making in LDCs. The second was the Nairobi Framework - aimed to facilitate participation of under-represented countries in the CDM (Reger & Belliethathan, 2016).

Similarly, Ramsamy; Knoll; Knaepen and Wyk (2014) scrutinized the positions of the African group before the Lima climate conference:

- *In the run-up to COP 15:* In subsequent negotiations, African efforts to influence the negotiations grew substantially, especially during and after COP15 in Copenhagen. During this conference African country showed more willingness to act jointly, and they argued that Africa was one of the most united groups at COP 15 articulating its position very well as a result of polishing the common position. The proposal of a “common responsibility framework for mitigation” put forth by developed countries was perceived by Africa as blurring the distinction between the commitments of developed countries and those of developing countries, as laid down in the earlier mentioned CBDR-principle. Sudan, for the Group of 77, and China, G-77/China, called upon parties to observe the principles of good faith, transparency, inclusiveness and openness. Africans are already impacted by climate change through increased droughts, health hazards, food scarcity and migration. The African representative called for transparent and equitable negotiations during the high-level segment.
- *At the 2010 COP 16,* held in Cancun: African political leaders showed significant differences, especially among regional powers, whereas technical negotiators appeared united. It was nearly impossible to consolidate the political and technical positions.
- *At the 2011 COP 17,* in Durban: An African flagship partnership was created. This was the first time Africa had a dedicated platform at the conference for high-level engagement. This partnership was the result of preparation for the COP and support from continental institutions including the African Development Bank. At this conference, African countries put forward about 100 submissions and agenda items.
- *During the COP19,* held in Warsaw in 2013: Africa presented a common position. The African Group of Negotiators (AGN) pointed out that historical responsibility in greenhouse gas emissions as well as loss and damage should be addressed. As a result, a Warsaw Mechanism for Loss and Damage was established. This addresses loss and damage



associated with the impacts of climate change, including extreme events in the most vulnerable developing countries.

### **African group's position at the Lima climate conference.**

Though the current chair of the African group is from the Republic of the Sudan, during the Lima climate conference, it was observed that countries like Swaziland, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia spoke on behalf of the African group. In this section, the paper scrutinizes the position of the African group with some other countries' positions for the sake of comparison. At the COP20, held in 2014 in Lima, substantive negotiations took place on the seven elements of: finance; adaptation; mitigation; cooperation and support; transparency of action and support; technology; and capacity building (IISD, 2014):

- *Finance:* on differentiation, Sudan, for the African Group, with Ecuador and Bolivia, for G-77/China opposed text suggesting “all” parties mobilize climate finance through a diversity of actions. The African Group recalled differentiation between developed and developing countries under the Convention, and the responsibility of developed countries to provide finance. Mexico clarified that “results-based” is not a precondition for access to finance, and stressed prioritizing both mitigation and adaptation finance. The EU clarified that “evolving responsibilities and capabilities” captures the growth in the levels of prosperity and GHG emissions of developing countries, noting that some are currently more prosperous than some EU member states. However, on Thursday, 4 December, Sudan, for the African Group, supported by Bolivia, for the G-77/China, Saudi Arabia, Maldives, India, South Africa, Ecuador, Zambia, Pakistan, Argentina and others introduced a conference room paper (CRP) containing draft elements of climate finance under the ADP, requesting that it replace the Co-Chairs’ non-paper as the basis for discussion.
- *Adaptation:* On loss and damage, the African Group and others, opposed by Australia, emphasized that it should become a stand-alone element in the new agreement. New Zealand opposed any reinterpretation of Decision 2/CP.19 (Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage).
- *Mitigation:* On differentiation, Kenya, for the African Group, lamented the overall lack of reference to equity, CBDR, mitigation obligations of developed countries, and specific national and regional development priorities. The EU said the text should reflect that all parties will eventually take quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets. The US called for an option in the text to update the Convention’s annexes to reflect parties changing economic and emissions trends.
- *Cooperation and Support:* Many parties supported consolidating the section on cooperation and support with sections on other elements.
- *Transparency of Action and Support:* South Africa, supported by Mexico, proposed launching a process for discussing transparency rules during 2015, with South Africa says this should be reflected in the ADP conclusions from Lima. The African Group, South Africa, Chile, Panama, Nauru, Brazil and Mexico called for building on the existing

measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) framework, with some suggesting it could evolve over time. The African Group cautioned against placing additional burdens on developing countries. Argentina, the LDCs, the African Group, Saudi Arabia and China emphasized differentiation, with many calling for maintaining the existing “two-track” approach to MRV.

- *Technology*: Swaziland, for the African Group, said that commitments should not shift responsibility from developed to developing countries, nor encourage private over public support. On institutional arrangements, Swaziland, for the African Group, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Algeria and Argentina preferred anchoring institutional arrangements in the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN).
- *Capacity Building*: Regarding institutional arrangements, South Africa, China, India, Iran, Tanzania, Tuvalu for the LDCs, and others were opposed by Canada, Japan, the EU, the US and others in regard to supporting the establishment of an international capacity-building mechanism. India noted that mobilization of private capital cannot be one of its essential elements. Switzerland, for the Environmental Integrity Group, the EU, Belize, Chile for AILAC, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Belarus, the Russian Federation, and Turkey endorsed the Co-Chairs’ text. Sudan for the African Group, Malaysia for the LMDCs, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, India, Uganda, Paraguay, Pakistan and others were opposed to the text. The African Group stressed the importance of the principles of the Convention; the concept of differentiation, cautioning against undermining it implicitly or explicitly, adaptation as Africa’s priorities, and equal and balanced treatment of these elements alongside mitigation and transparency. Noting that the gap is gradually closing, Nigeria asked parties to address issues raised by the African Group. Calling the text unacceptable in its current form, the Democratic Republic of the Congo identified areas not addressed, including: parity among the elements, differentiation, scope of INDCs beyond mitigation, and work stream 2 (pre-2020 ambition).

### **The Challenges Facing the African Group During the Negotiations**

Historically, as Roger (2013) discussed, delegations from Africa have faced challenges related to participating effectively in global climate change negotiations as a result of their position in the international system and a lack of the capacities required for meaningful engagement. In recent years, African states have nevertheless managed to negotiate more effectively, both individually and as a group. Critical to this has been efforts to gain access to material resources and better information, as well as clearer mandates from African leaders. On the other hand, other scholars Ramsamy et al (2014) argue that some of the main causes of fragmentation within the group are policy positions on climate change, which vary according to environmental and political priorities as well as the ways states are classified. For example, within the Group there is the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) that places emphasis on response measures. There is also the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that are pushing for all large

GHG emitters to take more responsibility in reaching the 2 degree limit in temperature, while the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) have a particular interest in finance, technology transfer and adaptation. Within this mix, South Africa stands out, not only as one of the continent's largest economies, but as a significant contributor to GHG emissions.

Moreover, the challenge facing South Africa is that it is part of the AGN, but at the same time, it is also aligned with other geopolitical groupings including the BASIC that includes Brazil, South Africa, India and China. The BASIC group was established in 2009, initially to promote the Copenhagen Accord and to promote the interests of the G77 with regards to GHG emission reduction commitments. These all pose a challenge that Africa as a continent is still working through. Similarly, Mekina (2013) mentioned the challenges of African countries during the negotiation in international climate change politics. The following could be a typical example:

- *Delegation Size:* Many African country delegations are comprised of fewer people than those of more developed countries.
- *Delegation Composition:* African delegations habitually negotiate in isolation without sufficient support from their countries. Richer delegations may be accompanied by policy makers and scientists who can decipher the complex technical language, its implications to national priorities, and provide supporting evidence.
- *Lack of Negotiating Experience:* Many country negotiators are not familiar with how negotiations are done.
- *Science versus Diplomacy:* Many country negotiators lack research to support their positions.
- *Other Technical Issues:* There are technical challenges specific to some African country delegations. These include slow or lack of Internet, which limits access to networks that can serve as information resources and powerful contacts.
- *Politics of the Africa Group:* As with all diverse negotiating coalitions, the Africa Group is not immune to politics.

### **Conclusion**

This paper attempted to examine the position and challenges of the African countries in international climate change politics. Though studies have shown that African contribution to the increase in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) is very small, they are definitely victims of the climate change consequences. Climate change has emerged as a critical development issue since the early 1990s due to its predicted impacts on biodiversity, rural livelihoods and national and global economies. Accordingly, climate change is a concern of African countries; however, they might comply and agree differently on the global provisions towards addressing the global environmental problems. Therefore, the paper has analyzed the position and challenges facing the African countries for the governance of climate change, addressed this issue in the third section of the paper that is organized as: 1) the African position in mitigation policy debate and responses; 2) the African group's position before the Lima climate conference; 3) the African group's position at the Lima climate conference; and 4) the challenges facing the African group during the negotiations.

The paper argues that both adaptation and mitigation have opportunities and challenges. To utilize the opportunities effectively and to reduce the negative effects of climate change, strengthening the institutional capacities will be the first thing to be considered in our mind. For this, there have been institutions that have initiatives, plans and strategies to respond to the challenges arising from climate change. However, the implementation of these measures is constrained by inadequate financial, institutional and human capacities. Africa needs to have an effective voice at international climate conferences and influence on the global agreement that will emerge to ensure that development and poverty reduction agendas are included in the outcome and follow-up action at national, regional and global levels.

As was discussed, the UNFCCC instruments for capacity building, finance and technology transfer have presented the main opportunities for the participation of African countries. As a result, African countries have become much more proactive in UNFCCC negotiations. A number of quantitative measures, including submissions, delegation size, and qualitative assessments by those within the AGN itself and beyond, demonstrate that participation has increased substantially. Conferences of the Parties, or COPs, to negotiate climate change have been held annually since 1995. The AU adopted its own declaration on Climate Change and Development in 2007, and it clearly expressed a common position at the Copenhagen COP in 2009 when it put forward the African Common Position on Climate Change that set the mandate of African negotiators.

One of the most important structural features of multilateral negotiations is the emergence of coalitions. Accordingly, African countries negotiate through the Group of 77 + China (G77), LDCs and the Africa Group. Africa's climate negotiations are currently being strongly led by the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN), an alliance that consists of climate change negotiators from every African country. The paper scrutinizes the African group's position in the previous conferences as well as in the Lima climate conference. Before the Lima conference, in terms of polishing the common position, Africa was one of the most united groups at COP 15, articulating its position very well. Moreover, at the Durban Conference an African flagship partnership was created. This was the first time Africa had a dedicated platform for high-level engagement at the conference.

At the COP 20, held in 2014 in Lima, substantive negotiations took place on seven elements: finance; adaptation; mitigation; cooperation and support; transparency of action and support; technology; and capacity building. At this conference, African countries, including Sudan, Kenya, Swaziland, and South Africa for the African Group, passionately expressed the overall lack of reference to equity, CBDR, mitigation obligations of developed countries, and specific national and regional development priorities. The African Group also said that commitments should not shift responsibility from developed to developing countries, nor encourage private over public support. Similarly, they stressed the importance of the principles of the convention, the concept of differentiation, the cautioning against undermining implicitly or explicitly, the adaptation as Africa's priority, and equal and balanced treatment of these elements alongside mitigation and transparency. Historically, the Africans position in the international system and lack of capacities required for meaningful engagement led to a challenge to participate effectively in global climate

change negotiations. However, in recent years, African states have managed to negotiate more effectively, both individually and as a group. The reasons for the effective participation as a group in international climate change negotiations include improving their access to material resources, and improving their access to information and expertise that enable them to negotiate with a much clearer mandate. Apart from the UNFCCC finance provisions of the AGNs, the African Development Bank has also contributed a significant role in the AGNs work. The principle of equity, which the African groups framed, has led them to participate effectively in global climate change negotiations.

However, the paper also identified some of the problems facing the group. Fragmentation within the African Group has been one of the challenges, and the main causes are policy positions on climate change, which vary according to environmental and political priorities as well as the ways states are classified. Besides, the challenge facing South Africa in negotiation is that it is part of the AGN, but at the same time, it is aligned with other geopolitical groupings including the BASIC countries of Brazil, South Africa, India and China. Other challenges facing African countries during negotiations include delegation size, delegation composition, lack of familiarity of how negotiations are done, lack of research based on science and diplomacy, and lack of immunity from politics.

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