

Letter to the Editor

Climate change in Africa

Bob Geldof is right. Canada must repair its tarnished international reputation on climate change. Canada must also restore its relationship with Africa. Africa is on the rise, yes, but still struggling with widespread poverty. And progress has been further jeopardized by recent global crises – food, financial and climate. Climate change adds an additional burden to the challenges of sustainable development. Africa, as the most vulnerable continent, which has contributed the least to the global greenhouse gas emissions, deserves full support to adapt to climate change.

Africa needs financing so that the needs of the most vulnerable are not ignored as they adapt to the adverse consequences of climate change. The poor, however, are not just the “victims” of climate change. They offer solutions. Mitigation and adaptation policies must learn from small-scale African farmers and conservation-based approaches. But climate change cannot be arrested without fundamentally changing the rules governing international trade and investment. This includes the regulation of Canadian corporate activity in Africa to ensure human rights and environmental considerations are at the forefront of economic decisions-making. Global warming is contributing to global poverty, exacerbating conflict and leading to injustice and the violation of fundamental human rights. It is well past the time for Canada to act.

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