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Pakistan Demands Climate Justice: Equitable Climate Finance is not Charity

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Pakistan contributes less than 0.5 percent to global greenhouse gas emissions, yet it ranks among the top ten countries most severely affected by climate change. As climate-related disasters escalate, Pakistan continues to call for international climate justice and meaningful support from high-emission nations.

In 2022, unprecedented floods submerged nearly one-third of the country, displacing approximately 33 million people and causing over \$30 billion in damages. The event highlighted the severe vulnerability of developing nations to climate change, despite their minimal role in causing it. Reconstruction and recovery efforts have been slow and costly, placing a long-term burden on Pakistan's economy and infrastructure.

Government officials have emphasized that this is not just an environmental issue, but a justice issue. While the bulk of global climate financing benefits wealthier, high-emission countries, nations like Pakistan struggle to secure adequate funding for adaptation, resilience, and recovery. The imbalance in financial flows has raised urgent calls for fairer mechanisms and faster implementation of global commitments.

The environmental and human toll within Pakistan is significant. Melting glaciers in Gilgit-Baltistan are threatening future water supplies, while extreme heatwaves in southern regions are causing health crises and deaths. Rural communities face increasing food insecurity, and widespread displacement has led to further socioeconomic strain. Cultural and ecological losses have also mounted, with traditional practices and biodiversity disappearing due to environmental degradation.

Children and women in flood-affected areas are especially vulnerable. A large number of children are now suffering from stunted growth due to malnutrition, while access to clean water, healthcare, and education remains limited. Despite these growing challenges, critical international assistance programs have been slow to activate. The Loss and Damage Fund, designed to support climate-vulnerable nations, has seen repeated delays in disbursement.

On the domestic front, Pakistan's courts have recognized climate action as a constitutional obligation. Proposals for a national Climate Justice Commission aim to increase accountability and ensure stronger climate governance. However, concerns remain about internal weaknesses in infrastructure planning and risk management, which can worsen the effects of climate events.

Projections suggest Pakistan could lose up to 20 percent of its GDP due to climate-related impacts by 2050. The call for climate finance is not a plea for charity, but a demand for fairness and responsibility. For global climate efforts to be effective, high-emission countries must acknowledge their role and act decisively to support those facing the brunt of a crisis they did not cause.