



Joint statement by the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC) to the G8 on sustainability, energy efficiency and climate change¹

We, the members of the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC), submit the following statement on sustainability, energy efficiency and climate change to the leaders of the G8 countries. The goal of this statement is to convey information and spur action on the occasion of the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm, Germany, in June 2007.

A consensus, based on current evidence, now exists within the global scientific community that human activities are the main source of climate change and that the burning of fossil fuels is largely responsible for driving this change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reached this conclusion with “90 percent certainty” in its Fourth Assessment issued earlier this year. The IPCC should be congratulated for the contribution it has made to public understanding of the nexus that exists between energy, climate and sustainability.

Although we recognize that this nexus poses daunting challenges for the developed world, we firmly believe that these challenges are even more daunting for the most impoverished, science-poor regions of the developing world, especially in Africa. These poor regions not only lack the resources to cope and adapt, but they also do not have adequate capacity in science and technology to successfully address the challenges of the future.

We refer to NASAC’s joint statement to the African Heads of State on “Building science, technology and innovative capacities in Africa” presented at the African Union (AU) Summit in January 2007.

We are encouraged by several recent events that indicate African leaders are increasingly recognizing the important role that science, technology and innovation can play in larger efforts to promote sustainable well-being. We draw attention to the commitment made by Africa’s Heads of State and Government at the AU Summit to increase investment in science and technology to at least 1 percent of each nation’s yearly gross domestic product and their decision to declare 2007 the year of “Science and Innovation for Africa.”

We acknowledge, however, that Africa will need help from the developed world if it is to successfully address the challenges it faces and we are convinced of the vital roles that the G8 governments and the international scientific community can play in the promotion of science, technology and innovation in Africa. NASAC, moreover, appreciates the G8’s decision to focus its 2007 Summit on “Growth and Responsibility” and to include Africa in its discussions.



We therefore make the following recommendations to the leaders of the G8 + 5 countries:



1. That the G8 governments support and encourage recent efforts by the governments of Africa to increase national investment in science and technology. Such support should be largely directed to assist in the revitalization of Africa's universities and research institutes and to help create centres of excellence. The goal should be to build at least one research intensive university in each of the major regions of Africa. In particular, the G8 should implement the recommendations of the 2005 report on Africa, endorsed at the G8 Summit at Gleneagles, Scotland, in July 2005, which calls on G8 countries to provide US\$5 billion to help rebuild Africa's universities and US\$3 billion to help establish centres of scientific excellence in Africa.

2. That the private sector, both in the G8 countries and in African countries, assumes its role and responsibility, in partnership with government, to establish research-intensive universities, through its financial and in-kind support of talented individuals, infrastructure, research and innovation.

3. That the G8 governments and national academies of science in G8 countries support efforts and lend their expertise to improve the ability of the African scientific community, particularly through its academies of science, to provide effective advice to governments on a range of issues, including sustainability, energy efficiency and climate change. We are committed to pursuing productive partnerships that will increase our capacities to provide credible evidence-based advice on S&T-based issues of both regional and global significance. We believe that together we are well positioned to assist in transforming Africa via science, technology and innovation into a continent of peace, plenty and stability.

4. That the G8 governments work in close consultation with the AU to develop a common agenda designed to advance the goals embodied in the AU's year of "Science and Innovation for Africa." We urge the G8 to establish a G8-AU fund for the advancement of appropriate and advanced technologies related to climate change, energy, information connectivity and water. The fund would be invested in joint G8-AU projects designed to help Africa meet its growing energy needs without placing additional stress on the global climate or on food security.

5. That the G8 governments assist the AU and its constituent medical institutions to deal with the challenges of infectious diseases through prevention and treatment, educational programmes, fostering the rights of women and children, developing effective means of treating HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and assisting in the improvement of health systems, particularly in rural areas.

6. That the G8 governments provide financial, scientific and technical support for the efforts of the African scientific community, including NASAC and the Association of African Universities (AAU), to work with the academies of science, engineering and medicine in G8 countries, to promote international cooperation in science and technology for the purposes of advancing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa.

African Academy of Sciences

Nigerian Academy of Science

Uganda National Academy of Sciences

Cameroon Academy of Sciences

Academie des Sciences et Techniques du Senegal

Zambia Academy of Sciences

Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences

Academy of Science of South Africa

Zimbabwe Academy of Sciences

Kenya National Academy of Sciences

Sudan National Academy of Sciences

Madagascar National Academy of Arts, Letters, and Sciences

Tanzania Academy of Sciences

¹ NASAC members consist of: the African Academy of Sciences, Cameroon Academy of Sciences, Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, Kenya National Academy of Sciences, Madagascar National Academy of Arts, Letters, and Sciences, Nigerian Academy of Science, Académie des Sciences et Techniques du Sénégal, Academy of Science of South Africa, Sudan National Academy of Sciences, Tanzania Academy of Sciences, Uganda National Academy of Sciences, Zambia Academy of Sciences and Zimbabwe Academy of Sciences.