

5 December 2019

To the President of South Africa**And the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
And Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy**

Dear Honourable President Ramaphosa, and Honourable Ministers Creecy and Mantashe,

Our prayers and all strength to the South African delegation attending the 25th UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Madrid.

This is a critical moment in our history and for our country. We ask that you, as President of our Republic, declare a Climate Emergency in South Africa, as several other countries have done. This would give a clear signal of your commitment, serve as an acknowledgement of the seriousness of the situation, and strengthen Africa's position and leadership at the climate talks.

We know you are aware of the imperative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in South Africa. However, now that we are aware that the timeline is much shorter than previously recognised, more urgent steps must be taken. Every day that we pump more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere exacerbates our crisis and the potential of a devastating consequences on South Africa's development trajectory.

There also needs to be a much stronger and more meaningful commitment to prevent deforestation of standing forests and the exploitation of developing countries' forests. Many communities in South Africa and in our region still lack access to affordable electricity, and continue to rely on fuel wood for their energy needs. Deforestation is destroying the ecosystems which buffer us against severe weather systems. As the President of South Africa, you have a vital role to play in our region and globally to find a way forward that protects the lungs of our planet. Africa must be supported and enabled to implement renewable energy systems.

We ask you to do all you can to implement meaningful and urgent steps to counter the climate crisis and environmental destruction.

With our prayers,



Francesca de Gasparis
Executive Director



Bishop Geoffrey Davies
Patron