

## **Press Statement**

For Immediate Release

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### **Ghanaian Youth Affirm African Leadership on Climate Justice, Call for Global Non-Use Agreement on Solar Geoengineering**

Youth organizations in Ghana and across Africa working across climate justice networks, community development coalitions, and research-based advocacy platforms are drawing attention to a critical concern: the rising promotion of Solar Radiation Manipulation (SRM) as a climate policy option threatens to divert the world from real, people-centered solutions, while introducing new threats of devastating impacts. SRM, a form of highly risky and speculative geoengineering that seeks to artificially cool the earth by dimming the sun, is being advanced by a narrow coalition of techno-elite interests. Such proposals do not address the root causes of the climate crisis; fossil fuel dependency, land degradation, inequality, and ecological injustice. Instead, they create new layers of risk for future generations to deal with. They shift global attention from transformation to manipulation, from resilience to risk-taking, and from justice to techno-authoritarianism.

Rather than gambling with planetary systems, youth movements in Ghana and across Africa are calling for a science-grounded and justice-led redirection toward proven socio-technical pathways. These include community-owned renewable energy, agroecology for food sovereignty, climate-resilient water systems, and locally driven adaptation grounded in indigenous and traditional knowledge. These real solutions are scalable, equitable and already delivering tangible results across Africa. Where SRM would centralize power in the hands of a few, real climate solutions decentralize agency and strengthen democratic governance. Where SRM depends on uncertainty and long-term dependency, real solutions build resilience, restore ecosystems, and generate green and dignified livelihoods. Recognizing this, youth in Ghana affirm that climate action must protect life, not add new risks; empower people, not displace agency; and uphold justice, not reproduce inequality.

We the youth note that the climate crisis must not be used as a pretext to advance speculative technologies that create new threats while deepening historical injustices. SRM is intentionally framed by its proponents as an “emergency option,” yet its emergence in global debates threatens to delay the one solution the world urgently needs: deep, rapid, and real emissions reductions and an end to production of fossil fuels. By shifting political attention toward technological manipulation of Earth systems, SRM would entrench policy inertia and undermine global commitments under the Paris Agreement. Instead of accelerating decarbonization, SRM creates “moral hazard” by enabling high-emitting countries and corporations to postpone climate responsibility.

The youth constituency in Ghana and across Africa stresses that SRM directly threatens Africa’s ecological and development interests. Scientific assessments warn that any deployment of SRM would disrupt rainfall patterns in West Africa, including the monsoon system crucial for food production. The negative impacts from SRM deployment would hit those most vulnerable first. For millions of smallholder farmers already facing drought uncertainty, crop failure, and water stress, SRM would amplify climate risk rather than reduce it. Ultimately, SRM puts everyone, both rich and poor, at unacceptable risks.

SRM also violates established principles of international law. The precautionary principle, enshrined in the Rio Declaration, compels states to avoid actions with irreversible environmental risks. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has already established a de facto moratorium on geoengineering, reaffirmed unanimously in 2024. Principles of transboundary harm further prohibit unilateral climate interventions that would impose risks on other nations without consent. Any outdoor SRM experiment affecting African skies would constitute a breach of sovereignty and a violation of the right of communities to free, prior, and

informed consent. This is not only a scientific issue. It is simply a matter of justice, governance, and human rights.

The governance risks associated with SRM are severe. Once deployed, SRM may need to continue for centuries to avoid catastrophic “termination shock,” a rapid rebound in global temperatures if intervention ceased. Human societies have never maintained stable, equitable, or peaceful governance over such a time horizon, making SRM deployment institutionally reckless. More than 600 scientists and scholars of global environmental governance have concluded that deployment of SRM is *ungovernable* and initiated calls for the establishment of a Solar Geoengineering Non-use Agreement (SGNUA). We are proud that African countries have shown global leadership by supporting this call. We fully support the consensus decisions at the 2025 African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) by all African Ministers of Environment to fully reject SRM as an option and explicitly call for the establishment of a Solar Geoengineering Non-Use Agreement.

Our call is clear: the world must prevent the development and deployment of SRM through a binding global Non-Use Agreement. Such a framework would prohibit deployment, outdoor experiments, patenting, military use, or public funding of SRM technologies. It would ensure that global attention remains on real climate action; rapid decarbonization, loss and damage finance, climate reparations, ecosystem restoration and locally grounded adaptation solutions.

Our generation will not accept a climate future governed by powerful elites who seek to manage the planet like a simple thermostat. SRM is about further disturbing an already deeply disturbed and highly complex climate system. Real climate leadership means refusing dangerous propositions and rather investing in solutions that strengthen dignity, equity, and ecological integrity. SRM is not a climate solution. It is a political hazard and a moral failure. The path forward must be grounded in responsibility, science and justice rather than planetary manipulation.

### **Our World, Our Rights, Our Future**

We join African governments, scientists, civil society, and frontline movements around the world in calling for a Global Solar Geoengineering Non-Use Agreement that establishes enforceable safeguards against planetary manipulation. Specifically, we demand:

1. Consistent with the 2025 AMCEN Decision, we call for a legally binding global non-use agreement that prevents deployment, any outdoor experimentation, patenting, public funding or promotion of solar geoengineering in international organisations, in order to uphold the precautionary principle and safeguard regional and global climate systems.
2. In line with the CBD de facto moratorium on geoengineering unanimously reaffirmed in 2024, we call for a clear prohibition on patents and commercial development of solar geoengineering technologies to prevent their capture by private or military interests and to avoid the commercialization of a technology that poses irreversible global ecological risks.
3. In alignment with principles of responsible climate finance, public resources should not be directed toward the promotion or advancement of solar geoengineering; instead, national governments, multilateral institutions, and philanthropic partners should prioritize funding for proven and equitable solutions such as emissions reduction, adaptation, and resilience-building.
4. To uphold integrity in global environmental governance, Parties to the COP, UNEA, and UNFCCC should close existing policy and regulatory gaps that could enable the normalization of solar geoengineering under the guise of research, and instead reinforce precautionary approaches anchored in international environmental law and multilateral consensus.
5. In accordance with the principles of sovereignty, equity, and free, prior, and informed consent, Africa must be safeguarded against any form of atmospheric intervention that could affect its

climate systems; no external actor should have the authority to unilaterally impose solar geoengineering risks on African peoples, ecosystems, or economies.