

CONFERENCE DECLARATION CLIMATE CHANGE THREATS – AN NGO FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

We, over 2500 participants representing over 500 Non-Governmental Organizations from more than 80 countries,

- recognizing that we share one planet and its environment, as well as a responsibility to protect future generations,
- recognizing the special vulnerabilities of the indigenous, poor, coastal and rural populations,
- having met at the 60th Annual UN Department of Public Information Conference for NGOs at UN Headquarters from 5-7 September, 2007, with representatives of Member States, UN agencies and programs, the scientific community, the private sector, media and civil society, and
- having reviewed the latest scientific evidence from a wide variety of experts as well as hearing about the experiences of indigenous peoples to better understand climate change, its threats and how NGOs can broaden the base for knowledge and action to reduce those threats;

make the following declaration:

1. We affirm that climate change is mainly anthropogenic and is one of the most serious threats humanity and our environment have ever faced which if not addressed will cause:
 - (a) catastrophic effects to Earth's ecosystems, biodiversity and infrastructure;
 - (b) significantly reduced availability of food, water, energy and transport;
 - (c) massive migration of populations and the possible destruction of entire cultures and small island nations,
 - (d) significant damage to our economic, political, cultural, social and spiritual structures,
 - (e) increased local, national and international violence,
 - (f) significant psychological and emotional distress to individuals and communities
 - (g) irreversible harm to the lifestyles of indigenous peoples,
 - (h) increased spread of vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever, and
 - (i) negative impacts on human health and life expectancy.

2. We commit ourselves over the next 12 months to a Framework for Action that will propose NGO solutions to these threats before they become irreversible:
 - (a) unify behind a common vision of collaboration – even if we disagree on tactics -- to develop and implement plans for adaptation and mitigation¹ taking into account the full range of consequences;
 - (b) act as vocal, active partners for change with the UN, governments at all levels, NGOs and other members of our global community;
 - (c) develop, implement and publicize individual and collaborative action plans for personal, economic and political change.

¹ Adaptation implies making lifestyle adjustments. Mitigation implies alleviating the problem.

3. We commend Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's leadership in highlighting climate change as a major priority. We urge government, industry, and UN leaders, in partnership with the NGO community to emphasize proactive climate change priorities for the greater good in preparation for the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali, December, 2007, and subsequent negotiations.
4. We strongly recommend, for the sake of future generations, that government and industry leaders, the UN, other international organizations and the whole of civil society partner behind and implement concrete solutions, taking into account recommendations that emerge from the Framework for Action, and to promote capacity building to monitor compliance and report effective practices.
5. We also strongly recommend that:
 - (a) all governments and civil society foster an ethical, moral foundation for ongoing sustainable development in our interdependent world making the well-being of all of humankind our priority.
 - (b) all educational institutions and media organizations more effectively educate about the issue of climate change with special emphasis on youth,
 - (c) governmental authorities consider penalties for excessive consumption and pollution as a method of financing climate change improvements, as well as financial incentives to foster climate-friendly technologies so that fossil fuel and nuclear based technologies can be phased out.
 - (d) governments recognize that war is damaging to the climate.
 - (e) all governments ratify UN conventions on climate change.
6. Finally, in order to implement the Framework for Action – recognizing that our views on challenges and opportunities will evolve as this process continues – we request that:
 - (a) the NGO/DPI Executive Committee and the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) foster a plan as soon as possible to implement the Framework as a tool for the NGO community to participate in an open, practical and transparent collaborative approach based on networking;
 - (b) the Framework discussion culminate in an internet-based progress report to be submitted to the Secretary-General in one year and that a long-term dialogue for future action be fostered thereafter;
 - (c) the Framework process should network NGO's that might not otherwise typically collaborate by bridging the spectrum of NGO concerns interconnected by climate change, such as sustainable development, agriculture, forestry, issues affecting indigenous peoples, biodiversity, livestock and animal welfare, nuclear proliferation, sustainable disarmament, and the end of war, justice, ethnic groups, multigenerational issues, youth, gender equality, education, poverty, food and water security, culture of peace, interfaith cooperation, national global security and economic justice, as well as mental, spiritual and physical health.

DECLARATION PROCESS
CLIMATE CHANGE THREATS – AN NGO FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The Preparatory Committee of the 60th NGO/DPI Conference (September 5-7, 2007) invites all participants to concur by consensus on September 7th with the Declaration on the reverse of this sheet.

Substantive suggestions for improvement are also invited; but they must be received by 6pm on September 6th and should foster a consensus. Recommendation forms should be placed into the boxes in Conference Rooms 1 and 4, or given to the Drafting Committee members, Mr. Larry Roeder, Dr. William Gellermann and Ms. Moki Kokoris, who will often be in the UN Cafeteria near the windows overlooking the East River. Recommended suggestions MUST BE 25 words or less.

The Drafting Committee's work is supervised by a Senior Review Committee made up of Sister Joan Kirby (outgoing Chairperson of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee), Jeffery Huffines (incoming Chair of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee), and Richard Jordan (Chair of the 60th NGO/DPI Conference)

Members of the NGO/DPI and ECOSOC NGO communities deal with a spectrum of issues that might not normally involve collaboration; but networking will be crucial to dealing with Climate Change, especially as it challenges all of us. The purpose of the Declaration is to provide a framework for action and collaborative networking, a tool to enable us to work together on the threats of climate change, which is essential to serving all of our particular mandates.

The Declaration envisages that over the next 12 months, we will collaborate and report our efforts to the Secretary-General, while continuing our collaboration in coping with the threats. The process by which this is to be done will be facilitated by the NGO/DPI Executive Committee. The recommendations that come out of the process do not need to have full consensus support across the entire NGO community; but they do need to be developed in the spirit of collaboration with and among all NGOs.