

Do not be afraid! Act now!

We, leaders of churches and international church organizations present in Copenhagen for the UN Climate Change Conference reiterate the Gospel message "Do not be afraid!" Act now! This message was echoed by the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and reflected by the unprecedented mobilization of international civil society during the first 10 days of this conference.

Do not be afraid to make the decisions that must be made for all of humanity and for the future of creation. Do not be afraid to act for justice and for love. Do not be afraid to make a fair, ambitious and legally-binding agreement. Do not be afraid, act now!

At this crucial stage in the negotiations we would like to reiterate our firm conviction that there is an undeniable historical responsibility on the part of the industrialized countries for the climate change crisis that we currently face. The injustice is that those who are suffering the worst consequences of this crisis have contributed the least to causing this situation. This is a matter of justice, and a call to moral responsibility. We would like to underline the importance of legally-binding commitments to addressing this crisis that recognize a common and differentiated responsibility. Accountability to these principles would be a sign of hope to all of us. We welcome initiatives from developed countries to step up the ambition of emission reduction targets and to provide adequate funding for adaptation measures to be implemented. We also welcome the positive initiatives taken by developing countries to limit and reduce their emissions.

Thousands of churches all over the world rang the bells on Sunday to express alarm for the climate change crisis and to call to prayer and hopeful and committed action. We continue to pray for courageous action. As government leaders you now must show moral leadership out of love for humanity and creation. Do not be afraid, act now!

Members of the Ecumenical Delegation at COP 15, including: Archbishop Desmond Tutu; Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC); Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, GS-elect WCC; Bishop of Greenland Sofie Petersen; Moderator Mardi Tindal, United Church of Canada; Rev. Tofiga Falani, Congregational Christian Church of Tuvalu; Bishop of Roskilde Peter Fischer-Møller; Prof. Dr. Barbara Rossing, Lutheran World Federation; Rob van Drimmelen, GS of APRODEV; Rev. Henrik Stubkjaer, GS of Danchurchaid, Rev. Mads Christoffersen, GS of National Council of Churches of Denmark.

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