

INTERFAITH REPRESENTATIVES AT COP 19 CALL TO FAST FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Warsaw, Poland
15 November 2013

We, as delegates and representatives of various faiths and faith based organizations, in solidarity with our brothers and sisters from the Philippines and all over in the world have decided to embark on a fasting chain, that will last until the end of the United Nations' (UN) 19th Conference of parties (COP 19) on November 22nd.

Fasting unites us as a common practice in our different religious traditions. Although we may be relying on different spiritual backgrounds we can all join in the common experience of voluntary fasting.

For us, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Hindus, indigenous spiritual traditions and other faith traditions, fasting has a strong spiritual meaning. It first and foremost allows to us to meet our God. In the midst of necessary technical and political discussions, we step back, pray and reflect. Through the concrete sensation of hunger we do not only declare ourselves in solidarity with suffering people, but we are actually in solidarity with them.

As we engage in COP19, it reminds us to relate the negotiations with our responsibility as a believer. We cannot live in isolation, but we must care for each other. As a principle of equity, we fast and reduce because we can for others who can not.

The fast marks our commitment to the principles of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change - intergenerational equity, the precautionary principle, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. We fast now because we are able to. There are many who live in poverty and who are vulnerable who cannot have these choices. This is our message to the global leaders and COP19 - those who can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must do so for the sake of the future generations and the vulnerability of the poor.

More than ever, it is time for us to all work together to be good stewards of the Creation.

That is why:

we are fasting in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable who are disproportionately affected by extreme weather events;

we are praying and fasting for the victims and survivors of typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, as well as other people affected by extreme weather events all around the world, which are increasing in frequency and intensity due to climate change; we are fasting, praying and meditating for a tangible and ambitious outcome to the climate change negotiations;

we are calling for urgent action to bring sanity and ethics in the international climate negotiations.

Together:

we call to the members of delegations and organizations at COP19 and people of faith around the world to join us in this fasting for one day.

We encourage all people of faith to contribute to this journey of public awareness and action for global climate justice. We need you to engage with your congregation and national leaders to inspire a commitment to change our current model to one that is sustainable and just. We invite those who are capable to fast for a meaningful outcome here in Warsaw as we head to COP20 in Lima, Peru, in 2014, and the urgent cutoff date for a binding emissions agreement for all countries at COP21 in Paris, France, in 2015.

THIS INITIATIVE IS SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING DELEGATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS AND FAITH COMMUNITIES WHO ARE PRESENT AT COP19

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
Act Alliance
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
National Islamic Council of Norway
We have Faith - Act now for Climate Justice Campaign
The Orthodox Church
International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB)
Catholic Diocese of Oslo - Dept. of External Relations
Kenya Youth Climate network
Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute (SAFCEI)
Interreligious Climate and Environment Network (ICE)
Brahma Kumaris- World Spiritual University
Church of Norway - Council on Ecumenical and International Relations
Christian Council of Tanzania
Ecological Society of the Philippines