

Justice and peace must prevail:

We must not betray life!

Statement from the World Council of Churches, WCC

To the High-Level Ministerial Segment of the

19th Session of the Conference of the Parties – COP19 to the UNFCCC

9th Session of the Meeting of the Parties – CMP9 to the Kyoto Protocol

Friday, 22 November 2013

Mr. President, His Excellency Marcin Korolec,

Distinguished Participants,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" Mathew 5:9

Five years ago in Poznan, the World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Family stressed the urgency to adopt more radical steps to cope with climate change, the most urgent issue facing humankind.

Nature is telling us to wake up and make the transition to a more ethical society based on justice, equity and sustainability without delay.

Life is the most precious gift. Life is beautiful, incomparable, but what is human life

if it cannot be lived in full dignity? What would a future be without pure fresh water,

clean breathable air, green forests and blue oceans to absorb and purify the atmosphere from

polluting carbon dioxide?

We fully know the causes and what must be done to at least ameliorate the damages.

We must have ambitious goals while managing the consequences for as long as it takes to minimize the threat. We ignore the warnings of the IPCC scientists to our peril.

We must stop the madness, stop the denial and stop the betrayal of a sustainable future for all.

Life in all its forms must be kept enjoying the perfect equilibrium of the natural world. Contemporary life is menaced by greed, violence, food, water, and energy insecurity. Is this the scenario we are

preparing for the generations to come? Are we so isolated from present reality, from the menace to peoples whose territory will disappear under water, whose habitat will be destroyed by advancing desertification? Shall all the remaining species disappear leaving the world without its rich and life-sustaining biodiversity? No!

But Human beings are at war against the natural world, our “global commons”; a war against planet Earth, which will end in the destruction of all forms of life, starting with the degradation in the life of human societies. We are still in search of a sustainable world, turning aside our faces, hearts and minds, not accepting the reality we are immersed in. We have joined a spiritual fast to that end.

The World Council of Churches believes that all people are created equal and have the same rights to benefit from the bounties of creation. Ecojustice and equitable development for all is possible while maintaining the ecological integrity of the biosphere.

Justice, peace and love are needed: we must not remain unmoved by the pain, the loneliness, the injustice, and the effects of the war against nature, without having done the utmost to save innocent people around our beautiful world from the consequences of our present indifference to the future.

This is what we, people of faith, people of firm convictions, have claimed from you in International Negotiations since Berlin in 1995 through to Paris: please look beyond your national interests to our common future, and increase your ambitions in Warsaw.

Do not betray us, do not betray yourselves and your families, and do not betray the hopes of the world of the future:

Act and act now!

The future is here, the future is today.

The world cannot wait: climate change is happening

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World Council of Churches – WCC: www.oikoumene.org