

Dear Friends worldwide,

The Statement below was developed by Quaker Earthcare Witness, the Quaker United Nations Office, and Friends Committee on National Legislation for their joint presence at events during the UN Climate Summit in September 2014.

A number of fellow Quaker organizations wished to add their name, including FWCC which sent the Statement out to Quaker communities worldwide. As a result we continue to receive signatures, which we add to the Statement, uploading the most recent versions onto the QEW and QUNO websites.

Three concerns have arisen in this process. Some meetings have asked us to give the Statement longer life by making it non-date specific, so that it can continue to be seen as relevant. Others encouraged language that was less anthropocentric. Still others felt that to be truthful we should more strongly acknowledge the grave dangers we face from climate change.

We have attempted to do this, while holding to the core message that Quaker organizations and Meetings have already upheld and signed.

If you wish to add your Meeting to this Statement, please contact Lindsey Cook as suggested at the end of the Statement.

If you do not wish to sign, but wish to use this material as a base for a Meeting-specific Statement, you are most welcome, but please take off the signatures.

In peace and with gratitude,

QEW, QUNO and FCNL

December 2014

Facing the Challenge of Climate Change

A shared statement by Quaker groups

December 2014

"It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?"

William Penn, 1693

As Quakers, we are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole Earth, in right sharing with all peoples.¹ We recognize a moral duty to cherish Creation for future generations.

We call on our leaders to make the radical decisions needed to create a fair, sufficient and effective international climate change agreement.

As Quakers, we understand anthropogenic climate change (climate change due to human activities) to be a symptom of a greater challenge: how to live sustainably and justly on this Earth.

We recognize that the current rise of greenhouse gas emissions is leading to an unprecedented rate of increase in global average surface temperature of extreme detriment to the Earth's ecosystems and species, including human beings.

We recognize that catastrophic global climate change is not inevitable if we choose to act urgently.

We recognize a personal and collective responsibility to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable peoples now, and all our future generations, do not suffer as a consequence of our actions. We see this as a call to conscience.

We recognize the connections between climate change and global economic injustice as well as unprecedented levels of consumption, and question assumptions of unlimited material growth on a planet with limited natural resources.

¹ Kabarak Call to Peace and Eco-Justice, 2012, p. 1

We recognize that most greenhouse gas emissions are created by fossil fuel combustion. We recognize that our increasing population continues to pursue fossil fuel-dependent economic growth. We recognize that the Earth holds more fossil fuel reserves than are safe to burn, and that the vast majority of fossil fuel reserves must remain in the ground if we are to prevent the catastrophic consequences of climate change. We therefore question profoundly the continued investment in, and subsidizing of, fossil fuel extraction.

We seek to nurture a global human society that prioritizes the well-being of people over profit, and lives in right relationship with our Earth; a peaceful world with fulfilling employment, clean air and water, renewable energy, and healthy thriving communities and ecosystems.

As members of this beautiful human family, we seek meaningful commitments from our leaders and ourselves, to address climate change for our shared future, the Earth and all species, and the generations to come.

We see this Earth as a stunning gift that supports life. It is our only home. Let us care for it together.

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEWF)
Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)
Westtown Monthly Meeting, Pennsylvania, USA
Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA)
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
Princeton Friends Meeting, New Jersey, USA
Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC)
Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, UK
FWCC- Asia West Pacific Section
Quakers in Aotearoa New Zealand
Croton Valley Meeting, NY, USA
Northampton Friends Meeting
Cookeville Monthly Meeting
Netherlands Yearly Meeting
Newtown Monthly Meeting
New York Yearly Meeting
Memphis Friends Meeting
Quakers in Australia
EcoQuakers Ireland
Quakers in Britain
Living Witness

Please contact Lindsey Cook at lfc00k@quno.ch if you need more information, or wish to add your Quaker group.