

**ACCION International • ActionAid International USA • Center for American Progress •
Center for International Environmental Law • Citizens for Global Solutions •
Columban Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Office • Conference of Major Superiors of Men •
Earth Day Network • EcoEquity • Friends of the Earth-US • Gender Action • Jubilee Oregon •
Jubilee USA Network • Leadership Conference of Women Religious •
Medical Mission Sisters' Alliance for Justice • Mercy Corps •
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate • National Wildlife Federation •
Natural Resources Defense Council • Nicaragua Network •
Oil Change International • Oxfam America • Priority Africa Network •
Quixote Center/Quest for Peace • San Francisco Bay Area Jubilee Debt Cancellation Coalition •
Sierra Club • Sisters of the Holy Cross • Sisters of Notre Dame Justice and Peace Network •
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations • US Climate Action Network •
Wheaton Franciscans**

June 4, 2007

Dear President Bush,

As you prepare for the upcoming Group of Eight (G8) summit in Germany, we are writing to convey our serious concerns regarding climate change and its impacts on developing countries and the world's poorest people. The United States must work collaboratively with G8 partners in support of the urgent action that is required to address critical links between global warming and global poverty. Building on previous G8 commitments to support developing countries, your meetings in Germany present a new opportunity to provide leadership on one of the most pressing international challenges in human history.

We are deeply concerned about reports that the United States is blocking all meaningful agreement on climate change at the G8 Summit. As the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently concluded, climate change is already creating devastating impacts for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people – especially those in developing countries – even though they are the least responsible for causing it. Those impacts will become all the more severe in the coming decades. Climate change is already a major driver of impoverishment and conflict around the world, but that fact has not yet been given the urgent attention it demands.

Over the past century, the United States and other wealthy countries have been and continue to be responsible for a disproportionate amount of the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. With only five percent of the world's population, the United States emits about 25 percent of greenhouse gases generated by human activity. Over the course of history, its responsibility is even greater. The G8 nations, which have emitted the greatest volume of greenhouse gases, have a unique responsibility to take action now not only to reduce their contributions to global warming, but also to provide assistance to help address the consequences that developing countries are increasingly facing. Moving the G8 countries onto a more sustainable energy path will not only help the environment and those affected by climate change, but will also create global economic opportunity.

Specifically, we believe that it is critical for the United States to endorse the goal of keeping global temperatures from rising more than 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit above pre-industrial levels, a level that the

scientific community has identified as a threshold beyond which dangerous and irreversible changes to the earth's climate will occur. In order to achieve this, global emissions must peak within the next decade, and emissions from the United States and other wealthy countries must be reduced by at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Agreement from the G8 countries around the 3.6 degree goal is vital to building effective international efforts to reduce global warming pollution.

In tandem with a G8 process and serious domestic action, the United States should commit to reengage in international negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including establishment of deeper mandatory commitments to reduce U.S. emissions. We ask you to support the launch of a negotiating mandate for a post-2012 agreement at the UNFCCC COP 13/MOP3 in Bali in December of this year.

The June summit communiqué should also address the G8's historic contributions to the adverse impacts of climate change on developing countries by pledging substantial new resources to those countries most affected. The IPCC Fourth Assessment Report found that “[e]ven the most stringent mitigation efforts cannot avoid further impacts of climate change in the next few decades, which makes adaptation essential, particularly in addressing near-term impacts.” The primary objectives of adaptation activities must be to build resilience and adaptive capacity in vulnerable, local communities and include consideration of climate change impacts in development planning.

The World Bank estimates that the annual cost of adaptation in developing countries is approximately \$10 to 40 billion, but this figure is now widely considered inadequate. New studies assess a more complete range of additional impact costs, including the costs of prioritizing climate change in policy planning, climate-proofing current investments, upgrading existing capital stock, and the costs of entirely new (unplanned) investments, on both the macro and community levels. These estimates suggest that climate adaptation in developing countries will likely cost at least \$50 billion annually -- and far more than that in the future if urgent measures to curtail global warming are not taken soon.

It is clear that a significant, stable and dedicated pool of new money will be needed to support forecasting, planning for and reducing the impacts of climate change on people and ecosystems. But these “adaptation funds” cannot and should not replace existing development funding commitments. In order for adaptation funds to achieve their greatest possible impact, the voices of those most affected and least responsible for climate change must be present in the design, implementation and evaluation of adaptation projects. In this spirit, the G8 communiqué should acknowledge that the cost of providing adaptation assistance to the most vulnerable countries should be borne by the greatest contributors to climate change.

Finally, we believe the G8 communiqué should respect the right of developing countries to fight energy poverty without being forced to follow the unsustainable energy path that has created the problem of global warming. Dramatic action must be taken by the G8 to address global warming, but the transition to a clean energy economy also provides multiple opportunities for technological and financial innovation. The world's wealthiest countries should end domestic and international subsidies to oil and other fossil fuels and support the development of sustainable energy alternatives in developing countries.

The issue of global warming is one of central concern to those concerned about global poverty and the environment. When you meet with your G8 partners, we urge you to engage on this issue of critical importance for our planet and its people. We wish you well in your important negotiations.

Sincerely,

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