

Climate Stewardship Summit
Interreligious Eco-Justice Network
Hartford, Connecticut, USA

AN OPEN LETTER OF SUPPORT
TO THE REPRESENTATIVE OF PHILIPPINES

November 12, 2013

Mr Nadarev (Yeb) Sano
Representative of the Government of Philippines
Conference of the Parties (COP19/COP9)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Warsaw, Poland

Dear Mr Yeb Sano

We wish to inform you, that in deep sympathy and solidarity with the victims of Typhoon Haiyan, and in strong support of your opening statement at the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, we the undersigned will join you by voluntarily taking part in fasting as reflective and prayerful witness to the current negotiations at the COP meeting.

We do so because we believe that urgent action is needed to bring governmental parties to the table at the COP meeting to take decisive action to curb the emission of greenhouse gases that are the main cause of global climate change. We understand this to be one of the greatest moral challenges of our time, for addressing global climate change and safeguarding all creation on Earth is a matter fundamentally central to our respective religious faiths and cultural traditions.

Below is the text of a statement we adopted at the conclusion of an all-day, interfaith Climate Stewardship Summit meeting, held at Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut, on November 7, 2013.

THE HARTFORD DECLARATION

A Call for Action on Climate Change by Connecticut's Interfaith Community

- There comes a time in every generation when a matter of great urgency requires that we, who belong to Connecticut's diverse faith community, express our concerns with moral clarity and with a unified voice. That pivotal moment has arrived. We can no longer ignore the plain facts of climate change.
- Our planet is increasingly under threat from climate change and global warming, endangering human beings and other life-forms in all regions of the globe. As a result, recent storms, floods, droughts, wildfires and heat waves have begun to have serious impact on our lives. Continuing increases of these extreme events threaten to destroy the underlying basis of human civilization as we know it.
 - Climate change will undermine the very ecological fabric of Earth that sustains life, while eliminating vast number of species on Earth.

- Climate change will disproportionately impact society's most vulnerable members – the poor and underserved community, the elderly, the chronically ill, communities of color, infants and young children, and those least able to fend for themselves.
- Many developing regions of the world continue to be impacted by severe storms, drought-like conditions, sea level rise, vector-borne diseases, and loss of food security and safe drinking water. This is already causing mounting tension, conflict and war. As conditions worsen, it will cause millions of inhabitants to become environmental refugees with untold suffering, affecting the security and well-being of the entire globe.
- As members of the faith community, we have a deep obligation to understand the full dimensions of this growing problem, which the scientific community has documented with overwhelming consensus in the past few decades.
- Safeguarding all creation on earth is a sacred trust that is placed upon us – to love, to care for and to nurture. *We accept this trust* as a universal moral imperative, one that we share across all human societies, religious faiths and cultural traditions.
- Given the urgency of the current situation, *we solemnly pledge* to:
 - Foster a reflective and prayerful response to the threat of global climate change.
 - Work together as people of many religions and cultures to live sustainably on planet Earth.
 - Encourage members of our faith to develop and implement energy conservation plans and to use safe, clean, renewable energy.
 - Be an authentic witness for action on climate change and environmental justice through teaching, preaching and by letting our voices be heard in the public sphere.
 - Advocate for local, state, national and international policies and regulations that enable a swift transition from dependence on fossil fuels to safe, clean, renewable energy.

This letter is also being circulated to other members of the interfaith community in the United States to gain further support for this act of solidarity during the negotiations at COP. These individuals belong to Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Bahai, Native American and other religious faiths and cultural traditions in our region.

Signed,