

Statement on the climate crisis by the Conference of Religious Leaders of France.

1 July 2015 (**embargoed until 12 noon**)
The Elysée Palace

The climate crisis is a spiritual and moral challenge

As members of the Conference of Religious Leaders of France (CRCF) we are speaking out together to share our conviction that beyond technological, economic and geopolitical issues, the climate crisis is a spiritual and moral challenge.

It is first and foremost our relationship with nature and with creation as a gift of God that is at stake.¹

Having lost sight of its relationship with nature and its intimate relationship with all that goes to make it up, humanity has lost its way through its lethal domination and exploitation of the environment.

We are challenged to rethink the way we live out our relationship with creation and the environment. We are one. By destroying the environment, humanity is destroying itself. By protecting the environment we protect ourselves, we protect our neighbour and we protect the generations to come.

Our spiritual and moral conscience is challenged.

We are challenged to act for justice, to work for peace, and to prepare urgently a safe and viable future for our children, to leave behind the era of energy that pollutes, and to rethink our economic models of production and unlimited consumption.

We appeal for an upsurge in awareness so as to act consistently in favour of the climate and to question our values and our attitudes. We have to say no to egotism and greed. We have to be open to compassion and fraternity. Solidarity and the common good must be our compass. We need to persevere and value all positive action.

Our appeal

France will host and preside at the 21st Conference of Parties of the United Nations on climate change (COP21). France plays and will play a key diplomatic role. We call for the adoption of a binding agreement which applies to everyone, and which:

- commits us to a timely end to the era of fossil fuels and sets out the bringing together of objectives for reducing global greenhouse gas emissions so that the average temperature rise be kept to well below 2°C, and which includes rules that ensure transparency, responsibility and a process of regular review of the objectives ;

¹ *The Holy Quran* ch.80 verses 24-32, "Then let mankind look at his food .How We poured down water in torrents, then We broke open the earth, splitting [it with sprouts], and caused to grow within it grain and grapes and herbage and olive and palm trees and gardens of dense shrubbery and fruit and grass -[As] provision for you and your grazing flocks."
The Bible, Genesis 2.15, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it."
From the quotes of the Bouddha – Dhammapada, "Not in the heavens, nor in the depths of the ocean, nor in any part of this vast world, is there a place where human beings can escape the consequences of their actions"

- **protects the most vulnerable populations from the impact of change** by helping them to adapt to this impact and by taking into account the loss and damage they suffer;
- **promotes both responsible ecological development and the fight against poverty** by guaranteeing adequate financing, technological transfer and reinforcing knowledge and expertise.

Our commitment

Although COP21 is a decisive stage, we are convinced that the challenges of climate change cannot be tackled effectively by nations alone, but require above all individual and collective mobilisation, today and in the years ahead.

We call on the members of our communities to increase their awareness of what is at stake in COP21 challenges and to take steps to change their own lifestyles.

We commit ourselves to impart and to communicate, on the basis of our foundational texts and our respective traditions, the demands of conscience, awareness and the responsibility of human beings within nature and creation.

Bishop Georges PONTIER and Bishop Pascal DELANNOY
The Bishops' Conference of France (CEF)
Revd François CLAVAIROLY and Revd Laurent SCHLUMBERGER
Protestant Federation of France (FPF)
Metropolitan Emmanuel and Metropolitan Joseph
Assembly of Orthodox Bishops of France (AEOF)
The chief Rabbi of France Haïm KORSIA (GRF)
and Mr Joël MERGUI, president of the Jewish Consistory Council of France
Rector Dalil BOUBAKEUR and Mr Anouar KBIBECH
French Council of the Muslim Faith (CFCM)
Mr Olivier WANG-GENH and Ms Lama DROUPGYU
Buddhist Union of France (UBF)

The Conference of Religious Leaders of France (CRCF)

The CRCF was created on 23 November 2010. It brings together six groups of religious leaders from Buddhism, the Christian churches (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant), Islam and Judaism. It is an initiative established by the desire of religious leaders in France to deepen their mutual knowledge, by the sense that together, in respecting other ways of thinking, they contribute to the cohesion of our society and by recognition that "laïcité" is part of the common good of our society.

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