

## **The Rome Symposium on Climate Change and World Development**

*(Rome, Wednesday 3rd to Friday 5th May 2017)*

[www.romesymposium.org](http://www.romesymposium.org)

**"The World at a Turning Point: Concerted Action for a Stable Climate,  
Sustainable Human Progress and Peace"**

### **Statement by the Expert Group**

*The First International Symposium held in Rome in June 2015 reviewed the realities and risks of climate change, identified weaknesses in the negotiating process before the Paris Climate Summit, COP 21, and proposed policies and measures for rapid and effective climate action.*

*In the new geopolitical context and with additional knowledge from research and evidence worldwide, the Second Rome Symposium has three key purposes: to marshal the powerful arguments for climate action; to demonstrate that a wide spectrum of organizations and prestigious institutions are fully committed to action; and third, to stimulate a worldwide movement for climate action in the vital interests of both present and future generations.*

*The Symposium was held on the initiative of President Mikhail Gorbachev, with support of the Italiani Foundation, the European Space Agency and the New Policy Forum. A representative of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development attended.*

*The broadly-based Expert Group of more than 20 international and Italian experts, scientists and practitioners that came together for the Symposium (see Annex) issued the following Call for Action, addressed to political leaders, negotiators, business leaders, activists and ordinary citizens around the world:*

## A CALL FOR ACTION TO ALL PEOPLE OF GOODWILL TO FACE THE REALITIES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

### ***The future of humanity is at stake. We need transformational change now.***

- We face an existential risk to our survival from human-induced climate change. That is to say, a risk with large negative consequences where an adverse outcome would annihilate life or permanently curtail its potential.
- The time for action is running out. The Paris Agreement, followed up in Marrakech last year, was a big step forward. However, current commitments by countries are nowhere near enough: they should be strengthened not undermined.
- Global carbon emissions need to be reduced far more rapidly than officially proposed. Today's path leads to a world with a 4–5°C average temperature increase relative to pre-industrial conditions, which would be incompatible with an organized global community, and result in a substantial reduction in global population. Even the Paris emission reduction commitments, if implemented, would result in a 3°C rise, increasing social chaos in many parts of the world with higher levels of deprivation, displacement and conflict.
- The need for urgent action is confirmed by analysis of specific regions, such as the Mediterranean area, a critical climate hotspot where even a rise of 1.5°C will have enormous consequences.
- At the core of the crisis is our model of economic growth, and globalization, as well as the failure of governments to take adequate and timely action.
- We must address the causes and effects of climate change by establishing far higher levels of global cooperation.
- The present path of slow, incremental improvements in energy and resource efficiency, the “greening” of the economy and reliance on markets alone, are not enough: we need rapid transformational change.
- Our leaders must be held accountable for their inaction; they should take real action now to preserve the prospects, safety and hopes of our children, and of succeeding generations throughout the world.
- The future of humanity is at stake. We must safeguard it with new initiatives as current processes are not working fast enough.

We call for a worldwide coalition of enlightened leaders in governments, corporations, religions, financial institutions, scientists and educators to press for emergency climate action, recognizing that a stable climate is a precondition for human well-being, stability and peace. They should focus on realising the immense co-benefits of climate action in creating good jobs, and enhancing security, dignity and fairness. They must give concrete substance to the Paris Agreement, and the Marrakech COP22 Proclamation and Partnership statements.

- We call on political leaders to face their responsibility for the security, health and wellbeing of citizens by urgently implementing deeper carbon emission cuts to contain the rise in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to take all possible steps to limit the increase to 1.5°C. They must act with solidarity, increasing the ability of all peoples to adapt to the impact of climate change and moving towards a new model of sustainable development in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- We call on faith leaders, artists, teachers, opinion makers and the media to play their role in honestly discussing the climate change threats and solutions and informing people and explaining ways forward.
- We call on the leaders of corporations, investment funds, financial institutions, regulators, cities and regions, to fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities to properly understand, assess and manage climate risk and opportunity, using their skills and capabilities to create the emergency transition to a low-carbon, resource efficient and equitable world.
- We call on each individual citizen to do their part in addressing climate change, with lifestyle changes where necessary.

The intent is to ensure that the Paris Agreement objectives are met in the shortest possible time in accordance with sound scientific, technological, economic and social advice, rather than being negated by “*political realism*” and short-term considerations as has happened so often in the past. This challenge is far greater than the interests of any individual nation state, special interests or organisation. We call on all people of goodwill to come together to press for action. Only through cooperation can this generation play its role in history. The global community and commons must now take priority.

Annex

### Participants in the Expert Group (1)

1. **Dr. Bill Becker**, USA: Executive Director, The Presidential Climate Action Project; former senior official of the Department of Energy; Member of the Gorbachev Task Force on Climate Change.
2. **Professor Valerio Calzolaio**, Italy: former Vice Minister of Environment; Expert on eco-refugees and migration; Adviser to UNCCD.
3. **Dr. Azman Cherkaoui**, Morocco: Special Adviser for Climate Change and Negotiations, COP22 Presidency.
4. **Dr. Giullieto Chiesa**, Italy: Journalist and author; Member, New Policy Forum.
5. **Dr. Gareth Dale**, UK: Senior Lecturer, Politics and History, Brunel University, London; Board Member, Journal of Sustainable development; Consultant on Development Issues, European Parliament
6. **Dr. Frederick Dubee**, Canada: BGI International Advisory Board; Director, China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation ;Vice Chair International Green Economy Association; Senior Advisor emeritus, United Nations Global Compact.
7. **Mr. Ian T. Dunlop**, Australia: Former senior international oil, gas and coal industry executive; Chair of the Australian Coal Association, 1987-88, and of the Australian Experts Group on Emissions Trading; CEO of the Australian Institute of Company Directors from 1997-2001. Member of the Gorbachev Task Force on Climate Change.
8. **Dr. Grazia Francescato**, Italy: Director for International Relations, GreenAccord; former Deputy of the Italian Parliament and President of WWF, Italy.
9. **Dr. Andrei Grachev**, Russian Federation: President, the New Policy Forum.
10. **Dr. Georgios Kostakos**, Greece: Advisor with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat for COP22; former Senior Adviser and Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Global Sustainability Panel.
11. **Mr. Martin Lees**, UK: Adviser to the President of COP20; former UNASG and Rector Emeritus, UN University for Peace; Moderator, Gorbachev Task Force on Climate Change.
12. **Mr. Graeme Maxton**, UK: Secretary General, Club of Rome
13. **Dr. Jennifer Morgan**, U.S.A: International Executive Director, Greenpeace International; former Director of the Global Climate Program, the World Resources Institute.
14. **Dr. Serena Pellegrino**, Vice-Chair, Environmental Commission of the Italian Parliament.
15. **Dr. Manuel Pulgar Vidal**, Peru: President of COP20; former Minister of Environment
16. **Dr. Joseluis Samaniego**: Chief of the Division of Sustainable Development and Human Settlements, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

17. **Dr. Oltmann Siemens**, Germany: Former World Bank Representative in Germany, Special Representative of the IFC in Europe and General Counsel of IFAD..
18. **Dr. Roberto Savio**, Italy: President Emeritus, the International Press Service; Member of the New Policy Forum.
19. **Prof. Ricardo Valentini**, Italy: Director of the Impact Division, the Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Climate Change, IPCC Member and Professor of Forest Ecology at La Tuscia University.

**Note (1):** The Experts participated in their personal capacities. Their participation does not therefore engage their organization. Not all experts necessarily endorse all the points made in the Call for Action.