

Creation Justice Ministries Welcomes COP 21 Paris Agreement as a Historic Step Forward

WASHINGTON, DC – December 15, 2015 Creation Justice Ministries leadership is heartened to witness world leaders of nearly 200 nations taking a significant step toward collective responsibility for God’s planet and God’s people by approving the COP 21 Paris Agreement. The Agreement includes a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as reviewing and increasing nations’ emission reduction commitments over time.



As faith communities in the United States, we also laud Secretary Kerry’s announcement during the negotiations that the United States would double its grant-based, public climate finance for adaptation by 2020. This new promise is part of an existing commitment by developed countries to jointly mobilize \$100 billion per year by 2020 from a wide variety of sources, for the purpose of meaningful climate change mitigation actions as well as transparency on implementation. Creation Justice Ministries is strongly committed to ensuring the United States follows through on and expands this promise. Vulnerable countries must have the financial resources to reduce climate risks in key areas, including emergency response infrastructure, agriculture, health, and water services.

Creation Justice Ministries Vice President, who is Presbyterian Church (USA) Environmental Ministries Program Director and a COP 21 delegate, commented, “We are very glad that the Paris agreement aims for ‘well-under’ a 2 degree Celsius warming. Presbyterians working in partnership with local communities—from Alaska to Peru to the Philippines—remind us that our sisters and brothers who already feel the effects of climate change deserve our solidarity and care.” Likewise, Creation Justice Ministries Executive Committee member and Episcopal Church Domestic Policy Analyst Jayce Hafner helped organize the delegation from her church, and she also celebrated this important step toward “addressing climate change and protecting frontline communities that bear the greatest burden” of climate devastation. “From the Gwich’in people in the Diocese of Alaska to rural farmers in the Diocese of Haiti, Episcopalians around the world are already experiencing the acute impacts of our changing climate.”

People of faith came out in unprecedented numbers to advocate for global climate action in Paris. Collectively, we delivered nearly two million petition signatures to negotiators calling for a fair, ambitious, binding climate agreement. The agreement reached is a reflection of the powerful advocacy work of communities around the world. World leaders have finally recognized that the moral imperative for strong, ambitious climate action — now and for decades to come — is strong. Yet, although the deal is an important step forward, it is insufficient. We commend negotiators for laying a strong foundation for climate change mitigation, and recognize that we in the United States have significant work to do to make good on existing promises, as well as achieve the level of change necessary. As we continue to build on this agreement, we call on the United States to take leadership in keeping existing climate finance commitments, as well as planning for the social, political, and financial implications of climate-related loss and damage. We remain strong in our commitment to collaborating with policymakers to strengthen, improve, and implement the Paris Agreement in the years to come.

Find tweets and news clips from Creation Justice Ministries’ members who went to COP 21 on Storify: www.storify.com/CreationJustice/christians-at-cop-21. See concluding thoughts on the Paris Agreement from Creation Justice Ministries member communions: [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#) * [The Episcopal Church](#) * [United Church of Christ](#)

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Creation Justice Ministries is an ecumenical organization representing the creation care policies of 38 Christian denominations, including mainline Protestant, Orthodox, Baptist, and peace churches.