

June 5, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As members of a coalition of diverse faith traditions, we are united across theological lines and called by our commitment to care for the natural world and to stand with vulnerable communities, both across the world as well as in the United States. Included in our coalition are many faith organizations that provide direct accompaniment, technical support and post-disaster relief to frontline communities globally. These communities daily face the devastating impacts of dramatically changing weather patterns. Climate change disproportionately affects the world's poorest communities, and our faith traditions compel us to bear witness to their suffering.

We are deeply saddened and disappointed by your decision to withdraw the United States from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement. We urge you to reverse your decision, and work to meet the US commitments under the Paris Agreement. We also encourage you to remain an active player in the UNFCCC, and continue to constructively participate in international climate negotiations in the future.

As people of faith, we believe that we have a responsibility to be caretakers of the natural world - to preserve our ecosystems for future generations and to ensure the human dignity and worth of all people. By pulling out of the agreement, you tragically flout this responsibility. The ongoing climate crisis places a disproportionate burden on women and children, communities of color, low-income communities, and tribal nations both in the United States and globally. This is a situation that demands bold action from all nations.

Weather events such as hurricanes, floods, and drought can create great instability for individuals, families, and entire nations. It can mean losing their livelihoods, incomes, homes and land. It can also lead to an increase in conflict, hunger, disease, displacement, and human trafficking. Exiting the Paris Agreement is an abdication of our responsibility, as the world's second greatest contributor to climate change, to address and mitigate these effects.

Many people in the United States live at or below the poverty line, including members of our own congregations. The Paris Agreement is a historic pact that will not only protect vulnerable populations, but benefit the United States' economy and society. It will reduce carbon emissions, result in long-term energy savings, and foster growth and job creation in the emerging alternative energy market. Efforts to address climate change are, at their core, efforts to protect all of earth's inhabitants, especially poor and vulnerable communities.

With your decision, we will now experience the broad international consequences for exiting the Paris Agreement and failing to meet domestic reduction goals. We will face diplomatic ramifications that could undercut cooperation on other global efforts that are in the interests of the United States and vulnerable populations whom we are committed to serve. Today's announcement sends the message that the United States cannot be trusted as a leader and partner in global affairs.

We believe that the United States can and must play a leadership role in addressing the environmental challenges which threaten our planet, our security, the health of our families, and the fate of communities throughout the world.

For these reasons, we join together to urge you, as the President of the United States, to reverse your decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement and to meet our commitments under that agreement.

Sincerely,

American Jewish World Service
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Church World Service
Creation Justice Ministries
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Hazon
Interfaith Power & Light
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
New Evangelical Partnership
Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America
Presbyterians for Earth Care
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Institute Justice Team
Sojourners
Soka Gakkai International-USA Buddhist Association
UUSC: Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth
Unitarian Universalist Association
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
Young Evangelicals for Climate Action

CC: The Honorable Rex Tillerson
The Honorable Scott Pruitt
The Honorable Wilbur Ross
The Honorable Steve Mnuchin
The Honorable Bob Corker
The Honorable Ben Cardin