

INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE
OPENING PLENARY STATEMENT
24TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON
CLIMATE CHANGE, (COP 24)
DECEMBER 2, 2018, KATOWICE POLAND

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"I fear for my future. I fear for my community". These words were spoken by a 17-year old from the Salt River First Nation in Northern Canada during the first meeting of the Indigenous Peoples Caucus at COP 24 and he told about the diminishing traditional food and water sources and drastic weather changes already affecting his Peoples.

Indigenous youth of the world stand before you today to affirm that we share his fears for our future. We were outraged to read the recent Emissions Gap Report from UNEP, which stated that greenhouse gas production actually increased last year, indicating that current State actions to reduce emissions are falling far short of what is required to meet the essential 1.5 degree goal of the Paris Agreement. The IPCC now predicts a temperature rise of 3 degrees or more at the current rate, which means two-to-three times higher in the Arctic. This will be devastating for Indigenous Peoples in the Arctic and around the world.

Indigenous Peoples have been at the forefront in warning about the impacts of the unabated production of greenhouse gases by the fossil fuel-based energy economy. The recent fires in California demonstrate that we are not alone in facing relocation, loss of life and our communities. We call upon the delegates to this COP to commit to a just transition to sustainable energy before it's too late for Indigenous Peoples, and for yourselves.

We have agreed to work with you to develop a new Platform for the protection and exchange of Indigenous traditional knowledge, based on equal participation, respect for our rights and recognition of the innovative and time-tested solutions we can offer to the world community. We are committed to carry this through at COP 24.

The children yet to come will look back on your actions at this critical moment and ask what you did to ensure a viable future for them.

What will you tell them?