

ECO

THE YOUTH TAKEOVER ISSUE

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Editorial: Andres Fuentes

Fridays for the Rights of Future Generations

Young people were born into a world of climate change, pollution, loss of biodiversity and the realities of vast inequality. Generations before us knew we would have to face the consequences of climate change, yet we were excluded from the decision-making processes. Now, we must work together with all generations for intergenerational equity to get a legitimate seat at the table, demanding the protection of our future.

In the face of the climate crisis and its catastrophic consequences, we need to be united and demand to be heard. Cooperation between generations is the key to achieving a future where life can thrive and where the rights of all people on earth are equally respected.

We **welcome and acknowledge** the reports of the IPCC and IPBES, which shape our knowledge of the crisis. On the other hand, it forces us to wonder why this issue has been continually ignored by politicians who have failed to act on what we desperately need to do to mitigate the crisis. There is no choice but to act. Now.

This is why we put our lives on hold for the climate strikes. Our strikes are as necessary as the air we breathe - this is why we are willing to sacrifice precious days of school. We must do all



Credit: Dominic Evans

that we can to rebuild our world for the benefit of generations now, and those to come.

We demand urgent and effective climate action and condemn any diversions from the path to climate justice. It is now time for young people to mobilize alongside the voices of indigenous peoples, women, marginalised groups and others whose voices are also not being heard. If not us, then who? If not now, then when? Our window of time to act is now closing and we will no longer allow our voices to be systematically ignored. It is fundamental that we are involved in deciding on the future of life as we know it.

Our fellow youth have been marching, striking, and raising awareness across the globe, as we did outside

the conference venue yesterday, with the goal of ensuring intergenerational equity in the form of safety for us, our children and our future. Because all generations have an equal right to biodiversity, clean air, fresh water and safe and healthy environment, this is more than an environmental issue, it is an issue of justice.

We have the solutions: participation of the voices who are left with the burden of climate change, voices with infinite passion and drive, as well as voices with the numbers to push forward serious change. We might still have some time, but the clock is ticking. We will dedicate ourselves to the fight for climate justice and intergenerational equity. As long as there is hope, there is a chance, and hope dies last.

Today's ECO is a takeover by the young people of this process.

Care About our Heritage? Fund the WIM.

Diversity makes the United Nations great. This diversity represents people from across the globe fighting together for something better, but this beautiful diversity is under threat from climate change. Each day, crucial parts of our culture are being washed away by storms and rising seas, as people are displaced from their homes.

As young campaigners, sitting in the mandated review of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) on Loss and Damage (L&D) has left us scared. Lack of action on this issue will categorically destroy the core of that diverse cultural heritage.

We need delegations to start taking Loss and Damage seriously. We urgently need finance for countries to rebuild after disaster(s) and displacement. Undermining real efforts to evaluate and progress on the WIM in these sessions supports the escalating climate crisis, and perpetuates cycles of underdevelopment, inequity and poverty. Young people in climate-vulnerable nations are the least responsible, but face a lifetime of consequences for the carbon-intensive lifestyles that adults in the Global North continue to lead. We must break this cycle. States must correct this profound injustice.

SB50 must be the start of a new era where nations in the Global North and big polluters recognize their

historical responsibility, and protect the most vulnerable and marginalized.

We also need this space to acknowledge the intangible cultural heritage at stake. The joy, sadness, and bonding that happens in your home, on your street, or in your school represent an intangible heritage, a heritage everyone has a right to. Without increased ambition, our generation will experience this loss on an unimaginable scale. The preoccupation with economic L&D, while vital, allows developed countries to obscure the unquantifiable severity of developing nations' losses. Promoting solutions like insurance, which keep wealth concentrated in the Global North, could never mend what is broken. How do you insure an identity?

We need justice in the form of reparations, a Loss and Damages Fund and a serious exploration of non-economic losses. We will not stand for rich nations delaying, ignoring and obscuring the reality any longer.

We are the global generation and we stand together. We learn, share, campaign, teach, win and lose together. Here, as you people, on the streets, as youth strikers, and every single time we stand up and demand better. WE do so together. It is time that national leaders take a leaf out of our book: Lead with love and justice, over greed and denial.

Climate Justice Means Migrant Justice

By 2050, over 1 billion people will be forcibly displaced from their homes, according to the Institute of Environment and Human Security of the United Nations University. Climate change is, and will continue to destroy infrastructure, forcing millions from their towns and cities. Yet no one is talking about climate migration. My generation will be forced to migrate on an unseen scale, yet the generation who caused the crisis fail to put protections in place to ensure our human rights and livelihoods.

This is terrifying for those living in developing countries and small island developing states. The reality is that they will be hit the hardest, but it is precisely those most affected who lack the resources of rich nations to quickly respond and adapt.

When presented with ecosystem change, species have three potential options: they adapt, they move, or they die. Recognizing this, protecting climate migrants is of the utmost importance because when your home is gone, where do you go? For us, the answer is simple: countries with more space and resources must provide asylum and social integration. These are the same countries who have created the climate crisis, they have a historical debt to pay. But, this is a complex problem. Fascism is rising across developed nations.

In Latin America we are seeing waves of migration due to the ongoing conflict in Venezuela. In this case, there were no plans to address this issue and as a result, many governments closed their borders and installed migration policies that limit access for those needing asylum.

In the case of war, it is relatively easy to examine the historical context and identify which countries owe a debt and therefore should have a strong inclusive migration policy. When it comes to climate displacement policies, this is even easier. We know exactly which countries are the big polluters.

We must act now. Our generation is facing losses of an unimaginable scale. Our governments need to pursue and implement comprehensive and inclusive policies for those displaced by climate. If we keep ignoring their voices and blocking the issue in this space, we will see more conflict, loss of life and rise in anti-migrant rhetoric. We must urgently address the issue by adopting concrete policies, accessible structural bodies and mechanisms so that climate migrants can be protected. In other words, we need climate justice because climate justice means migrant justice. As it stands right now, those at risk will have nowhere to go and no one to protect them.

Climate Action: Recommended by Your Future Doctors

Each year, according to the WHO, air pollution results in 7 million premature deaths. Burning fossil fuels is one of the main sources of air pollution and poses an existential threat to our health. This is only one aspect of the many ways that climate change negatively impacts human health. Climate change also contributes to increased heat strokes and deaths due to extreme weather events. These effects put the viability of all of our health systems at greater risk every day. We must not forget that the ultimate objective of this convention is to protect people and the planet against the adverse effects of climate change on health and welfare.

As future medical professionals, we diagnose climate change as a medical emergency, and it must be treated that way. When someone arrives in the emergency room suffering from a life-threatening condition, you expect healthcare workers to act. Fortunately, there is a treatment available for this medical emergency: strong climate action. This includes, but is not limited to, phasing-out fossil fuels and the use of sustainable infrastructure strategies.

Addressing the root causes of climate change comes with substantial health benefits. These benefits are so significant that for some policies, they can entirely offset the costs of adaptation and mitigation. Such is the case for smart urban planning and transport schemes.

Nevertheless, we see a disappointing lack of progress in the most important modalities currently being negotiated. As future medical professionals, every day we will be trusted to work according to science and evidence-based guidelines. Choosing not to acknowledge the latest science violates our professions' ethos and should violate yours as well.

The outcomes of these negotiations will impact core determinants of health – clean air, safe water, and shelter. We therefore urge all parties to work with the latest science, welcome the IPCC 1.5° report, and implement all necessary measures to stay below 1.5 degrees.

A Future Empowered? What ACE Needs from SB50

Education, training, public awareness, public access to information, public participation, and international cooperation - collectively the six elements of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) - form a crucial pillar for successful implementation of the Paris Agreement. ACE is vital for young people, who not only fought on behalf of Article 12, but also have a great need for empowerment in order to tackle the challenges of climate change.

The ACE negotiations at SB50 centre around the preparation of the Terms of Reference for the final review of the Doha Work Program (DWP) on Article 6 of the Convention, which will conclude its mandate and be evaluated in 2020 at SB52. Looming beyond this review is the question of what the framework will be for ACE action following the DWP.

Parties so far lack consensus on the scope of the final review of the DWP to consider possibilities for this post-2020 framework. It is a cause of significant concern for many, including young people, that some Parties seem reluctant to address this topic. This reluctance takes place under the guise of not wanting to prejudice future decisions under the process. Yet, there is no question that we must have a new ACE framework to succeed the DWP, and this should constitute a framework that is even more robust.

Therefore, Parties would do well to include a forward-looking perspective into the final review of Doha itself, rather than delaying this to a subsequent consideration for the sake of taking just one painstakingly small procedural step at a time.

Young people are demanding urgent action on climate change. In the context of ACE, this means making the most of the Doha review in order to quickly advance toward a new and enhanced ACE framework. By showing reluctance in this effort, Parties send a discouraging signal; whereas a strong, future-oriented outcome on ACE from SB50 will demonstrate that the cries of the youth are not only heard, but inspiring ambitious action.

People Before Profits. Our Livelihoods Depend On It.

Intergenerational equity is reflected within the preamble of the Paris Agreement, and as such, young people are allowed to participate within the UNFCCC negotiating space. But this participation and acknowledgement has and will continue to be silenced if the presence of big polluting businesses continues within the UN climate negotiating space.

The dominant presence of those most responsible for the climate crisis not only results in the suppression of the voices of youth, but also those of indigenous peoples, women, and other marginalised groups. To protect these groups and the integrity of the negotiations, young people believe that we desperately need a Conflicts of Interest policy.

The well-financed, well-organised, and deliberate attempts by these big polluters to interfere in the policy making processes are very prominent here at SB50 and in the UNFCCC. So much so, that it has created a space where the irrationality of having those who profit from the climate crisis, here at the UNFCCC, is no longer coming into question.

So far in the Arrangement of Intergovernmental Meetings (AIM negotiations), where this issue could be discussed, we've seen non-party stakeholder contributions being pushed to later sessions and witnessed the calls for a policy on conflicts of interest by Climate Justice Now, the Women & Gender constituency, the Indigenous Peoples Organisation and YOUNGO being met with complete disregard by parties.

It has never been more necessary for young people to stand up for ourselves, in solidarity with others, to demand that the protection of our earth be taken seriously. We have no vested interests here and most of us are losing money by being here. Our mandate is clear, and our aims are untainted. We will keep working until we create a space for genuine, ambitious climate policy that protects people, not polluters.

Not So 'Common' Common Time Frames

If you are looking for common tabular formats (CTF) in this article, you are reading the wrong piece. This CTF refers to the common time frames for the implementation of the nationally determined contributions (NDCs). We know that when it comes to common time frames, most people think it is common sense to have a five-year time frame. Why? Well, the NDCs are communicated every five years and the global stocktake takes place every five years. Nevertheless, the negotiations on common time frames (and other areas) don't always follow common sense.

We have followed the two negotiations on CTF at the Bonn session and, just as at COP24 in Katowice, not much progress has been made. At COP 24, Parties agreed that common time frames will apply to NDCs to be implemented from 2031 onward. However, it doesn't really address when the NDC shall be communicated. 2025 or 2030? Well, the general consensus in the room is that NDCs communicated in 2025 should be implemented from 2031 onwards.

The other crucial question on CTF's is, when will Parties finally make a decision on this important item? Some Parties have floated the idea of finalizing this important item by 2023, which is as late as you can get. We believe that Parties need to leave Bonn with a deadline, as to achieve consensus on the CTF as soon as possible. Just like vacations, some Parties like to plan their NDC a bit early, so anything beyond 2020 is far too late. The final decision text should also explicitly mention that the implementation period shall begin five years after the NDCs have been communicated.

Lastly, we want to remind you why a 5-year

NDC implementation period is preferred:

- It avoids locking in low levels of ambition. Assuming Parties choose to adopt 10 year NDC implementation periods, and given that the next round of NDCs will be tabled ahead of 2025, there is a risk of locking in low ambition for 15 years between 2025 and 2040.
- It harnesses rapidly evolving real-world opportunities by allowing the Paris climate regime to better take into account the technological, political, and economic progress.
- It incentivizes early action by avoiding delayed action on climate mitigation. Governments can always align their 5-year commitments with 10-year aspirational targets.
- It aligns better with the broader Paris climate regime since NDCs will be communicated every 5 years and the global stocktake takes place every 5 years.
- It maintains political accountability, since most election cycles are 4-6 years and fulfilling commitments made for periods well into the future will become someone else's political liability. Having a 5-year implementation period will increase the sense of responsibility, urgency and accountability of incumbents.

Youth are demanding more ambitious action on climate change. A common time frame that matches the Paris ambition cycle is crucial to ensure that the Paris Agreement serves its purpose and provides youth with a sustainable future.

Renewable Energy-powered Music Festival

Time: 15.00 to 19.00

Place: "Platz der Vereinten Nationen" directly before the UNFCCC centre

It's free!

CAN PARTY

Time: 21:30 - onwards.

Place: Centro Hotel Bristol, Prinz-Albert-Strasse 2, 53113 Bonn

Please remember to **bring your badge** (or 2nd-week accreditation letter) to be charged a discounted Entrance Fees – 6 EUR.