



***Our Climate, Our Voice, Our Change:
Advancing Youth Action Through Partnerships for Global Impact***

**Youth Climate Change Conference
October 10-11, 2017, in Kingston, Jamaica**

YOUTH STATEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

We, the youth delegates of Belize, The Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, The Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Jamaica, Japan, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and The Republic of Suriname - participating countries in the Japan-Caribbean Climate Change Partnership;

Being present at the Youth Climate Change Conference 2017, in Kingston, Jamaica;

Recognizing the severe impact of climate change on individuals, communities, and countries, particularly with respect to the youth; and with respect to the rights of individuals, particularly the right to life;

Being conscious of youth concerns in the areas of activism, capacity, policy decision processes, research, transparency and the legal and regulatory frameworks within our countries;

Hereby commit ourselves to leading, supporting and advocating for actions by our peers, communities, institutions, leaders and policy makers on climate change, under five broad areas of focus.

1. Youth activism:

- Developing a social audit toolkit to assess the social and ethical performance of initiatives in tackling climate change;
- Developing a social media toolkit to promote and coordinate initiatives surrounding the fight against climate change;
- Developing climate change frameworks in countries listed above in order to incorporate youth, and reinforcing existing initiatives;

- Supporting the youth arm of our home country ministries to mitigate the effects of, and adapt to climate change;
- Involving vulnerable groups in the development and promotion of strategies;
- Continuing to work together towards a Kingston Framework that is a youth-led action in which the youth have: a) training courses for disaster risk reduction; and b) engaging the youth in citizen science.

2. Capacity building

- Developing, implementing and maintaining effective climate change awareness programmes:
 - Incentivise programmes to promote youth interest and involvement, particularly through educational opportunities;
- Supporting and participating in the implementation of climate change awareness programmes focused on the youth - including all vulnerable groups in an equitable manner, leveraging the support of influential persons and institutions;
- Using multimedia to host discussions and share ideas about climate change, thereby reducing the costs of collaboration;
- Using visual and performing arts to attract youth and to perform community outreach, while tailoring climate change information to attract multi-generational audiences.

3. Policy

- Advocating for the amplification of the voice of the youth in policy processes (drafting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation);
- Making youth aware of relevant policy developments as they happen.

4. Research

- Informing public awareness campaigns using mixed method approaches;
- Ensuring youth are involved in ongoing research being done in countries, as required by the UNFCCC contributions;
- Centralizing, publicizing and making easily accessible the results of climate change research.

5. Legal framework

- Advocating for the enforcement and strengthening of laws imposing stricter sanctions and fines. For example, discouraging slash and burn agriculture, illegal mining and littering;
- Advocating that infrastructure and building codes mandate the use of sustainable and renewable sources of energy, such as the use of solar power, wind power, and geothermal power, with tax exemptions for those who comply, and mandatory fines for those that do not comply, by the year 2020 (applicable to new infrastructure built or commissioned after 2020);

- Advocating for the regulation of international funding within countries to ensure sectors, such as agriculture, are given a substantial amount that can be inputted into climate-smart agricultural practices, which can make a positive impact on the sector;
- Strengthening of environmental impact assessment models, so as to ensure the development of our tourism and business sectors in particular, coincide with sustainable development;
- Encouraging the implementation of the returnable containers law, similar to what obtains in some Caribbean countries¹.

GLOSSARY

1. VULNERABLE – In need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect (*The Oxford Dictionary*).
2. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – An international environmental treaty negotiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>).

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Out of the deliberations it was noted that Belize, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines have Acts that are similar in nature.