



Pacific Conference of Churches

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Press Release

Where is New Zealand and Australia?

As the 15th Conference of Parties reaches midway, it is clear that the issue of climate change means survival to some countries and economic growth to others. The Association of Small Island States have submitted a proposal to secure the twin objectives of survival of the Kyoto Protocol and to strengthen the UNFCCC with a new 'Copenhagen' Protocol that can be adopted here in Copenhagen", said Ambassador Dessima Williams of Grenada.

The Pacific Conference of Churches is a fellowship of 28 member churches and 9 national Councils of Churches in the Pacific region, representing approximately 85% of the region's 8.2 million people. In Copenhagen today, we are witnessing the struggles of the oppressed, the vulnerable and the marginalised to be heard. For us the Pacific Islanders, the outcome of this Conference of Parties will impact the very survival and existence of some of our Pacific Island Countries.

"We can no longer remain on the sidelines and be happy "observers" of the events and await the generosity and sympathy of the developed nations to address our cause. After all we only have one planet and if we do not act today, we will face unfathomable consequences in the future. As the ecumenical movement, our symbol is the boat, not a ship, not a cruise-liner...but a simple boat; we are all on this boat together" said Fe'iloakitau Kaho Tevi, General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches.

Action is needed now!

Whilst the Pacific island government delegations in Copenhagen are all in support of the AOSIS proposal, it is strange to see that New Zealand and Australia are surprisingly silent and nowhere to be seen

We urge our partner Churches and ecumenical bodies in Australia to call on the Australian government to show leadership as the chair of the Pacific Islands Forum and demonstrate support towards the AOSIS position as most, if not all Pacific Islands Forum member countries are members of the AOSIS.

Failure to demonstrate support for the AOSIS position will be indicative of the policy guidelines that really dictate New Zealand and Australian governments' involvement and interests in the Pacific region.

The Pacific Conference of Churches remains confident that an ambitious and binding agreement is possible in Copenhagen.

"1.5 to survive" this is our rallying call, this is our future.

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