



Protecting Our Future: Chinese, Indian, and United States Youth United for a Strong Climate Agreement First Version

We stand at a historic moment in our response to climate change. World leaders will meet in Copenhagen this year to reach an agreement on a global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Our countries' economies represent past, present, or future significant source of the emissions threatening our planet. While there is potential for strong partnerships between our nations, our leaders are constrained by vested interests in their desire to protect their people, blaming each other's lack of commitment as a reason not to contribute to a global solution that could benefit us all. Youth recognize that we each have a common but differentiated responsibility to contribute to solutions to the climate crisis. We are united in our belief that global emissions reductions must begin. There is no time to lose.

As youth, we will be alive in 2050 to experience the success or failure of our leaders' effort. We are direct stakeholders to this process. We have come together to state our vision for the opportunities that our countries must take advantage of to help mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as the support that each ought to receive to effectively participate in a shared solution to the climate crisis. We are the inheriting generation of today's decisions about climate change, and our future is in the hands of our governments' negotiators. At the same time, we recognize that our future is also our own responsibility. We are ready to make the long-term commitments we outline here, not just ask others to do it for us. We are speaking up for our future. As youth, we are united in our belief that joint action to reduce climate change is a singular opportunity to enable sustainable development in communities throughout the world. We recognize this historic opportunity as a unique chance to celebrate our interdependence and realize mutual benefit by effectively and collaboratively responding to climate change.

Although separated by distance and language, and without the money, power, or time that our leaders possess, we have succeeded in agreeing on a vision for cooperation amongst our countries. If youth can share a vision for a secure future and a healthy planet, we hope that our governments can cross the same barriers that we have crossed, and work together on a mutually beneficial agreement for the protection of our climate, our nations, our generation, and generations to come. Divided, we will surely all suffer. United to prevent the inequities of the future, our nations can succeed and prosper.

Agreed Principles

- **Emissions Reductions**
 - As the largest historical emitter and one of the top two emitters today, youth agree that the United States must take the lead in reducing its emissions below levels that will give us more than a 50% chance of stabilizing carbon dioxide equivalents below 350 parts per million, the safe upper limit in our atmosphere according to the latest science. This means more than 40% reductions from 1990 levels by 2020, and more than 80% reductions by 2050.
 - As the world's largest emitter, and with quickly growing emissions, youth support a commitment from China for more than 50% reductions of carbon intensity and 60% reductions in energy intensity from 2005 levels by 2020, and establishing appropriate mitigation policies that would begin reducing its emissions, and increase the scale of its emissions reductions, as its share of world emissions continues to increase.

- Although not one of the largest contributors to emissions today, India's growing emissions will soon make it a large contributor to future climate change. Youth understand the issues of equity inherent in India making commitments to emissions reductions when developed countries fail to do so. However, in a scenario where developed countries at least maintain their previous emissions reduction commitments, and take on progressive new and long-term emissions reduction targets based on 1990 levels, youth believe that India also has a strong role to play without constraining its development path. Youth support a commitment from India to stop the growth in its emissions as soon as possible, with other developing countries reducing their emissions from "business-as-usual" levels.
- **Technology Transfer**
 - The wealthiest nation on the planet, youth agree that developed countries like the United States must help enable emissions reductions in poorer, less well equipped nations. The United States should seize the opportunity to invest in the future of its own youth by helping to reduce emissions around the world. The U.S. should be prepared to invest jointly in research and development projects that will ultimately prevent countries' lock-in to a high carbon development pathway. This will benefit the U.S. by avoiding expensive and damaging climate impacts. Nations partnering in technology transfer must work to provide institutions, infrastructure, intellectual property sharing, and human capacity that will allow them to put these technologies into action.
 - As a large receiver of technical and financial support for mitigation, China should be ready to spend increasing shares of its own growing wealth on emissions reductions. As it begins to succeed in reducing its emissions, China must closely collaborate with the United States on joint mitigation projects, and both nations should begin to pass on their results to less developed countries.
 - As India is one of the largest partners in technology transfer in our vision, we see it implementing large scale technological solutions to decarbonize its economy. We envision that technology transfer will not happen through technology created in one country and simply shipped to another. We envision intellectual property sharing by all countries, removing trade barriers on clean technology to allow easy and cost-effective technology transfer. We see the U.S. playing an active role in capacity building in India through funding R&D, education, and training of people to produce and deploy clean technology. We see India participating in joint ventures with China and the U.S. to create the clean technology required for low carbon development.
- **Adaptation**
 - The United States must also contribute, as part of its funding toward the climate change agreement, to supporting some of the adaptation needs of other nations to the climate change damages that the United States' own emissions have partially caused. Adaptation funding is necessary to ensure a commitment by other nations to reduce their emissions, and this global agreement will ultimately benefit the U.S. by reducing the climate damages that the U.S. already experiences, and will increasingly experience if no agreement is reached.
 - China and other emerging economies should also take up appropriate responsibility to help less developed nations with adaptation.
 - Adaptation is a primary reason for India to take leadership domestically, regardless of what happens internationally, because India has already been, and will continue to be, severely impacted by climate change. Although India should be a recipient of adaptation support, it should also take appropriate action to mitigate and minimize its emissions - emissions that will increase its own need for adaptation efforts.

Signed:

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Kids vs. Global Warming
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June 10, 2009