

## **The Voice of Children and Youth for Rio+20**

2011 Tunza International Children and Youth Conference

**Bandung Declaration**

*October 1, 2011*

- §1 We, the delegates to the 2011 Tunza International Children and Youth Conference representing 118 different countries, are united in calling upon world leaders to move to a sustainable development pathway that safeguards the Earth and its people for our generation and generations to come. We urge governments to respond to and not ignore the demands of the children and youth.

### **Section 1: Rio+20 and the Promises to Our Generation**

- §2 Next year, our leaders will meet in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to critically assess and accelerate our progress towards sustainable development. The “Rio+20” gathering will mark a generation since the 1992 Earth Summit – the first effective global recognition of the environmental, social and economic costs of unrestrained development.
- §3 While we were not at the Earth Summit in 1992, we know that it was transformative. As a result, sustainable development has become a critical component in the protection of the environment and the eradication of poverty. We have met the children and youth who stood there and called to the moral consciences of our leaders and citizens to act.
- §4 We have also read of the promises made and that continue to be made to us, the inheriting generation, which remain unfulfilled. Our governments have promised to reduce poverty, stem environmental degradation and enhance equity. They have promised to combat climate change, ensure food security, provide clean drinking water and protect our planet’s biodiversity. Businesses and multi-national corporations have pledged to respect the environment, green their production and compensate for their pollution.

§5 Yet, our planet's future – our future – is in peril. Our generation has seen the warning signs in Rio 1992 become the realities that face Rio+20: poverty, climate change, pollution and depleting natural resources are all symptoms of our unsustainable development patterns. We feel, understand and know that we cannot wait another generation, until a Rio+40, before we act.

## **Section 2: What We Are Going to Do**

§6 **We are the next generation of decision-makers and we stand for action and change.** Therefore, we pledge the following commitments to make the Rio+20 Earth Summit a milestone for change.

§7 **1. Lobby our governments to make Rio+20 Earth Summit a top priority.** We will identify our governments' positions, listen to their commitments and hold them accountable to us. We will demand that our governments, leaders of the private sector and civil society groups attend the Summit and make ambitious commitments now. We will call upon governments to formulate and implement sustainable development policies, which also address poverty eradication and are supported by strong enforcement mechanisms.

§8 **2. Adopt more sustainable lifestyles and educate our local communities, including indigenous communities, sharing knowledge at the same level.** All action starts with the individual and we are committed to reducing our personal ecological footprint. We will teach and encourage each other to be responsible consumers using all available tools. Yet, many young people remain unaware of basic environmental issues because of inadequate schooling. We will demand that environmental education and awareness raising be mandatory in each of our schools' curriculum.

§9 **3. Work toward sustainable development through a green economy transition.** We know that young entrepreneurs are now developing the new approaches needed for this transition and we will support each other as our generation develops sustainable technologies and processes. We will ask educational institutions to invest in these activities. We will urge governments and civil society to support young entrepreneurs and innovators that work towards sustainable development. We will support businesses that are environmentally responsible. We will lobby governments to pass laws and to put in place higher taxes on products that don't conform to this. We will continue to realize our vision of a sustainable world.

§10 **4. Contribute to local, national, regional and global discussions on sustainable development.** We will demand to ensure children and youth participation in all decision-making processes at all levels. We will support institutions that balance development and the preservation of resources for future generations, and oppose any government or corporation that violates this principle. We will use every opportunity to convey our message to push Rio+20 leaders to take tangible action at the end of the conference. We will encourage that concrete actions be taken to conserve the environment such as the World City Forest initiated at the TUNZA International Children and Youth Conference 2011.

### **Section 3: What Green Economy Means to Children and Youth**

- §11 We believe a green economy values human well-being, social equity, economic growth and environmental protection on an equal basis. It is an integrated framework for sustainability that meets the needs of the present while providing for future generations.
- §12 Nearly half of the world's population is under the age of 25 and most live in developing countries. It is crucial to invest in education, employment and empowerment of children and youth in the green economy. This will both enable them to live productive and worthwhile lives while contributing to a just green economy transition. We agree with the United Nations Secretary-General: failing to invest in children and youth is a false economy.
- §13 Every region, country and community will have its own unique green economy. Yet, we urge the Rio+20 Earth Summit to agree that all green economies should:
- Endeavour to enrich the well-being and dignity of all people, both economically and in terms of quality of life;
  - Protect and value natural resources and ecosystems, on which all life depends, and recognize the traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities;
  - Invest in education and social entrepreneurship which engenders sustainable development values;
  - Promote good governance, accountability and corporate social responsibility; and
  - Engage citizens to protect the environment in their everyday lives.

## Section 4: Governments and Corporations Need to Come to Rio and Deliver

§14 **We cannot wait any longer: we must act now to move swiftly and decisively on a green economy path toward sustainable development.** While recognizing that each nation must chart its own way, we call upon world leaders to come to Rio to collectively reinvest political will in:

- Developing national green economy transition plans and agendas for action;
- Enhancing cooperation and coordination among developing, emerging and developed countries;
- Implementing socially responsible governance at local, national, regional and international levels, including ending all forms of corruption;
- Meeting all Millennium Development Goals by 2020 with tangible, measurable achievements;
- Protecting human rights and the development needs of young people, particularly access to education and employment in the green economy;
- Increasing the engagement of children in the development and ensuring children and youth participation at all levels of sustainable development governance, including monitoring and evaluation;
- Ensuring access to health services including sexual and reproductive health empowerment of young girls and women in sustainable development strategies;
- Responsibly phasing out subsidies that are harmful to the environment;
- Protecting the rights of citizen activists;
- Incorporating environmental and social considerations in economic policy formation and adopt alternative measures of development to gross domestic product; and
- Lobbying media institutions to pay more attention to environmental reports.

§15 We call upon business leaders to collectively commit to:

- Implementing effective corporate social and environmental responsibility through a new economic model that ensures sustainable resource use;
- Being accountable for the sustainability of their supply chain and production patterns;
- Providing training, education and funding support for children and youth and communities to work toward a green economy;
- Increasing investment in environmentally-beneficial scientific research and development; and
- Raising community awareness of the damages of unsustainable business practices.

## Section 5: What Governance Means to Children and Youth

- §16 We know firsthand that the adoption of international Plans of Action at the 1992 Earth Summit, such as Agenda 21, did not automatically result in real change where it matters – in countries, corporations, campuses and communities. In fact, weak implementation, corruption and the lack of transparency and accountability have hindered much-needed progress towards a sustainable future. We know there are already hundreds of international agreements to protect the environment, but many do not deliver on the ground.
- §17 At the Rio+20 Earth Summit, we need to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the established international institutions and assess new institutional structures that guide us toward a sustainable green and fair economy. We believe such structures should:
- Strive always for peace and cooperation among people from all nations;
  - Focus on implementation of existing international agreements and plans of action;
  - Hold governments at all levels, corporations and civil society organizations accountable to their promises and obligations on sustainable development;
  - Strengthen and ensure effective children and youth participation within the United Nations system;
  - Further the implementation of the precautionary principle and demand reparations of damages, such as applied to new technologies and practices; and
  - Adopt ambitious Sustainable Development Goals and hold all governments accountable for their achievement.
- §18 We also know that it does not stop there. We must support national and local governance reform as well. We believe that good governance at the country, state, province and city levels should:
- Secure public access to information and environmental justice;
  - Meaningfully engage all stakeholders in the decision-making process, considering the views and opinions of minorities, underprivileged, illiterate, and unemployed young people;
  - Fight corruption wherever it exists; and
  - Protect and defend the rights of young and future generations.
- §19 **This is our declaration to fight for environmental justice not only for us but for all generations to come.**