



On Monday May 8th 2017, Brahma Kumaris, QUNO and Newcastle University co-organized a panel named: “**A Negotiator’s tool-kit**: a range of powerful arguments to engage with-busy Ministries on clear and concise reasons for urgent climate action.”



Even on this first day of the conference, with many other side events going on, about 55 participants joined the panel. The question to the panelists was: “How would you convince your ministry about taking urgent action in 5 minutes?”.

Climate science: Professor Monika Rhein, from Bremen University, collaborated with the production of the IPCC Report:

Professor Rhein mentioned how-one of the strongest scientific climate argument is the increase in warming and acidification of the oceans. There has been a 2% global oxygen decrease in every ocean during the last 5 decades.

Sea level rise, warming, acidification and deoxygenation is a heavy threat to human societies and marine ecosystems. Professor Rhein reminded us that more than 40 % of the world population lives near the coasts and would therefore be endangered by this massive ocean rise. About $\frac{2}{3}$ of the CO₂ emission quota consistent with a 2° temperature limit has already been consumed. At the current emission rate, the total quota will likely be exhausted in 30 years.

Economy: Yamide Dagnet, from the **World Resources Institute (WRI)**. It is an independent, non-governmental global research organization which seeks to create equity and prosperity through sustainable natural resource management. Yamide shared how climate change should not be considered as an obstacle by developing countries but as an incentive for them to develop in a sustainable manner, especially when it comes to infrastructure. Infrastructure for sustainable longtime growth is facing three key challenges:

1. To implement the sustainable development goals.
2. To cut emissions to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 while increasing resilience & adaptation.
3. To tackle the issue of cost of impact and accelerate the low carbon transformation already underway.

A few facts in order to fully understand the COST of the impact of climate change:

- . Up to 80% farming lands lost in sub-Saharan Africa due to increase drought and aridity.
- . Kiribati bought 6,000 acres of land to relocate citizens threatened by sea level rise.
- . In the US since 1980, 1\$ trillion lost to extreme weather and climate change.

Peace and security: Lindsey Cook from the QUNO office at the United Nations guided us through a reflection on Peace and security. Secure societies, including well-being of people and nature, are rooted in solidarity, justice and respect for interdependence. They experience secure lives through the basic human rights of life, health, food, water, adequate housing and self-determination.

In 2015, year of the Paris Agreement, countries spent an approximate USD 1.6 trillion on military facilities worldwide while the aggregate climate budget continues to be dangerously inadequate to meet urgent climate action. Humanity faces unprecedented rates of temperature rises and species extinction in our human history. Ms. Cook ended with the question: "What is true security?"

Food Security: Teresa Anderson, Action Aid:

Food security is, by far, the most essential argument for urgent climate action. Climate change will impact food production almost everywhere. The higher the temperatures, the more disruption to our food systems. Impacts will be the most severe in Southern countries, particularly those whose economies are most dependent on agriculture.

When we talk about average global temperatures, it means higher temperatures in some regions, particularly large land masses.

Why is there an urgent need?

Impact on crops reducing crop yields through: rising temperatures affecting the water cycle; droughts, late rains, low rainfall or heavy rains, floods, cyclones or false starts of rainy seasons. The rising temperatures also affect pollination and seed setting. Raising sea levels by one meter will affect 6 million people in Egypt, 13 million in Bangladesh, 75 million in China. It will also affect 50% of the rice production in Vietnam and 16% in Bangladesh. So, climate change implies a loss of food security, livelihoods, rising food prices and frequent widespread and severe hunger emergency.



Civil society engagement with governments: Katharine Rietig, De Montfort and Newcastle Universities:

In her presentation Ms. Rietig shared how governments could gain by engaging with non-state actors / civil society and what kind of input it should have in their policymaking process

- .1) Knowledge transfer: drawing lesson from projects.
- 2) Legitimacy and local support.
- 3) Accountability and transparency.
- 4) Partnerships and networks facilitate implementation to leverage civil society support and increase capacity.

Human Rights: Benjamin Schachter, OHCHR:

We are here for a simple reason. Climate change and its impacts hurt people. In some cases, they kill people. We know this and we know that human action is both the cause and the solution.

In a statement before COP22, calling for urgent action, the High Commissioner stressed that “there is a clear disconnect between the Paris Agreement’s stated ambition to limit warming to less than two degrees and the commitments countries have made.”

OHCHR is working hard to ensure that States do take rights-based action to protect human rights from the negative impacts of climate change. And it's important they do so for several reasons:

- 1) They committed to do it in the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and their human rights commitments which require them to respect, protect and fulfill human rights for all persons.
- 2) It is the right thing to do.
- 3) Rights-based climate action is more effective.



Maureen Goodman, Brahma Kumaris and Benjamin Schachter, OHCHR

Ethics: Maureen Goodman, Brahma Kumaris:

What is our collective responsibility towards communities and families directly affected by climate change and towards the generations to come? These are two key very ethical perspectives – the responsibility towards the people of the Earth at this present moment and our responsibility towards future generations. Implicit in this is the recognition of the human factors driving climate change, the changes needed in human behaviour and the life style that could move us even beyond sustainability towards human flourishing and the flourishing of our Earth. What kind of political decisions would we need to take to move this forward and to achieve the best outcome possible?

Seasoned Negotiator: Lessons Learned

Ronny Jumeau, Ambassador for Climate Change and SIDS, Republic of Seychelles.

We've never had so much information and knowledge on Climate change. I come from a small island and I once was a minister with so much information, so how to convince a minister of family affairs that climate change is important, and that the minister of environment is not just wasting money of the country?

We need to try to find the best way to make people understand that climate change is no longer about climate only but about the quality of life, and the loss of ways of living. This is very meaningful when you are working in a small country where civil society is composed of ex-civil servants so that they can understand what we are talking about. It is essential to have these conversations with those working in education as well as real estate, because bad constructions can also be weakening the oceans.

The youth became so active in the Seychelles using social media, living without plastics, motivating each one to produce their own electricity to sell it to the state as a second income. Still, we need to emphasize climate change as part of your family life in order to live a better life, for our children in their home.

End of report