

INTER-VASITY CLIMATE CHANGE DIALOGUE

SPEECH,

I am happy that in the lead up to Convention Of Parties, COP 21 in late November 2015 at Paris, AYICC Kenya has been running campaigns and engaging several initiatives on awareness creation, and capacity building actions to climate change. All these with the intention of empowering youth to better understand climate change discussions, advocate for the continuous nurturing of the environment and take an active role in implementing climate change adaptation and mitigation projects and activities in their communities.

AYICC have also engaged university students through climate change mini-dialogues hosted by university environmental departments and clubs as the case here today and I believe that these activities have also provided an avenue to better equip the youth with knowledge as well as mentorship in careers in climate change and environmental fields.

With the so called “*little knowledge you have*”, you are already playing a role on climate change to the positive. By

sacrificing your resources to congregate here shows that you care for the future generations in which we have borrowed this earth from as President Obama says and it is a fact. Climate change is real as all have experienced the outcomes of the same.

Use of fossil fuels, Deforestation and unsustainable agriculture contribute to climate change, which decreases the availability of nutritious food and clean water, and destroys ecosystems and secure living environments. This leads to malnutrition, ill health and migration, rendering youth in particular vulnerable. At the same time, youth constitute the majority of the population in many countries and have an increasingly strong social and environmental awareness, which has the power to transform our societies towards a low-carbon and climate resilient future.

The work undertaken with and by youth is crucial to raise ambition of governments to come to an agreement on a new climate change regime. Tackling climate change requires concerted coordinated government action as well as conscious and informed efforts by individuals. Therefore, it is essential

to strengthen both formal and informal education on climate change and viable lifestyles. In addition, sustainable production and consumption patterns must be promoted and youth supported as environmental champions in their local communities. Partnerships should be developed between governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental and youth organizations for joint environmental initiatives aimed at building the capacity of youth as future leaders and driving forces behind a new climate change regime. Considerable efforts are also needed in strengthening the adaptive capability and resilience of youth in rural communities in developing countries.

More efforts must be made to ensure that youth are ready to take advantage of new environment oriented employment opportunities. Growing attention to climate change and sustainable development offers a chance for green economic growth around the world. Green jobs not only provide much-needed employment opportunities for youth, they also give youth an outlet to contribute directly to the fight against climate change by adopting green behaviours in the workplace as well as in their private lives.

Climate change is happening, and it is happening quickly. All over the world, ecosystems and livelihoods are being drastically affected by climate change.

The **impact of climate change on young** people's livelihoods is enormous.

Climate change is likely to affect employment patterns in different ways. Rates of unemployment are already higher among youth than among adults, and with most of the world's young people living in areas where dependence on natural resources and persistent poverty intersect, climate change could pose a serious threat to youth livelihood patterns and economic stability.

On a more positive note, adaptation and mitigation efforts are opening the door to a new category of employment green jobs across a multitude of sectors, and young people could be the segment of the labour market best positioned to access them.

However, as previously indicated, this new type of employment may be linked to other development challenges.

Environmental stress has already been responsible for numerous internal conflicts, and climate change will only

increase the strain on the environment, especially in developing regions. Throughout Africa, almost all major river basins are trans-boundary in nature, and any reduction in these water resources could raise tensions on the continent. Ongoing conflict can exacerbate the consequences of climate change in affected areas. Many young people in the developing world reside in areas that have endured extended periods of armed conflict, resulting in serious resource depletion and reduced adaptive capacity. Prolonged conflict has direct and indirect health on sequences relating to displacement, the breakdown of health and social services, and the heightened risk of disease transmission. Any threat climate change poses to youth development is likely to be aggravated by drawn-out conflicts.

On June 13, 2013, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, called on youth around the world to take action to address the effects of global climate change. Ki-moon recognized the immense challenge presented by global climate change stressing the important role he believes youth should play in implementing “ambitious answers” to this challenge.

Now that you have read, been taught and seen in your Universities about Climate change it is our hope that with this newly gained knowledge you are inspired to take on the challenges presented by climate change and do your part in achieving sustainable development goals.

I suggest you take these steps as a youth:

1. **Calling All youth** get informed,
2. **Be the change** by taking a more conscious approach to your everyday behaviours by considering the environmental and social consequences of your actions. This a good first step in decreasing your carbon footprint and Practicing a sustainable lifestyle sets when being a positive example for others to follow;
3. **Educate others** by sharing knowledge including: your peers, school boards, community leaders, Government Officials, business owners, and so on. Encourage them to learn more about climate change and to modify their personal and work-place consumptive behaviours.
4. **Mobilize Collectively**, youth in action are a power

5. **Volunteer** in Youth civic engagement which has the potential to profoundly impact local communities' sustainable development efforts. Donating your knowledge, skills and labour on activities such as environmental clean-ups, building sustainable structures, and recycling programmes have both immediate and long-term effects.
6. **Partner**: For sustainable development
7. **Advocate** for government action since it is up to the current generation of leaders to take concrete steps to harness the potential young people represent in the fight against climate change. Governments should draw upon their youth populations to compliment their efforts and strengthen the implementation of sustainable development policies and programmes.

In my position, I welcome you to feel free at ANU and lets all join hands in mitigating climate change by being the change we admire. I appreciate the organizers of this and ANU welcomes more of such. Have a fruitful day all.