



BRAHMA KUMARIS WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY

A CALL FOR URGENT CLIMATE ACTION: THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

Statement for the
COP 29: Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference of the Parties
United Nations Climate Change Conference
11– 22 November 2024, Baku, Azerbaijan

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, rooted in principles of peace, compassion, interconnectedness and non-violence, urges the international community to take decisive action at COP29 to address the climate crisis. We recognize the vital importance of this issue, as evidenced by the alarming and continuing rise in global temperatures, and the devastating impact this has on our planet and its inhabitants.

The Spiritual Dimension

At the core of Brahma Kumaris' work is the understanding of the connection between our consciousness, thoughts and actions, and their impact on the world. It has been seen that long-lasting change in any social or environmental system starts with a profound shift in the minds and hearts of people.

The current environmental crisis is therefore a clear call to transform our awareness and lifestyle. It is our conviction that, through inner development, each one of us can contribute to changing the world.

To bring stability, resilience and compassionate action on a global scale, we believe a widespread capacity for silent reflection and meditation is essential. When scaled up, such individual efforts would gain unstoppable momentum. We now call on those present at COP29 to engage and work together to create a more sustainable relationship with the environment and to secure a just and equitable future for all.

At COP29, our focus is on:

1. **Accelerated climate action.** The Global Stocktake and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) need to demonstrate significantly increased ambition if they are to respect the provisions of the 2015 Paris Agreement and to be aligned with the latest scientific evidence.
2. **A just transition.** Any transition to a low-carbon economy will only succeed if we prioritize social justice and inclusivity, ensuring no one is left behind.
3. **Non-economic loss and damage.** We highlight the need to recognize and address the non-economic impacts of climate change. Here, our focus is particularly on vulnerable and marginalized communities, and indigenous peoples, across the globe. We are deeply concerned that those who have contributed least to the climate crisis are often the most seriously affected by it.
4. **Intergenerational justice.** It is important to take the long view. If future generations are to inherit a healthy and liveable planet, then we believe that climate decisions must be made with their interests at heart. This calls for a reversal of the “business as usual” approach in which short-term gains tend to take precedence.
5. **Peace and conflict resolution.** We also believe that the pursuit of peace and the resolution of conflicts are essential for effective climate action. Competition for resources often fuels conflicts. In the field of energy, we advocate for the development of local solutions through affordable renewable energy projects, an approach that the BKs have pioneered in India.
6. **Resilience and adaptation.** COP29 presents us with an opportunity to prioritize investments in climate resilience and adaptation measures that will protect communities from the impacts of climate change.
7. **Mitigation.** Ambitious NDCs are crucial for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement and limiting global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

A Spiritual Call to Action:

The gravity of the climate crisis can only be addressed through urgent and transformative action. By integrating spiritual values into our response, we approach the multiple challenges before us with compassion, wisdom, and a renewed sense of purpose to make a difference.

As people of faith, we are clear that there are many steps, founded on universal values, that individuals and communities can take. Among them, we highlight:

- Embracing a sustainable lifestyle, for example by taking measures to reduce our carbon footprint through plant-based diets, energy conservation, and mindful consumption.
- Promoting peace and compassion. Beginning with the cultivation of inner peace and going on to extend compassion to all living beings.
- Advocating for change. Taking the initiative and using our voices to press for climate action and to hold leaders accountable.
- Supporting vulnerable communities. Standing in solidarity with those most affected by the climate crisis and assisting wherever possible.
- Promoting a significant, deep cooperation between parties. If our efforts to combat the climate emergency are to succeed, it is essential to work together with people and organisations across the globe to raise awareness and effect real change.

Conclusion

Identifying and implementing solutions to the climate crisis is not merely an environmental challenge, but a moral imperative. As a spiritual organisation, we believe that it is our duty to come together to protect Mother Earth, our common home, and to ensure the well-being of all its inhabitants. The decisions made at COP29 will have profound consequences for generations to come.

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Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU), with its spiritual headquarters in Mt. Abu, India, comprises a worldwide network of centers in 110 countries and is an international non-governmental organization of the United Nations accredited with General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC);

Associate Status with the Department of Public Information (DPI);

Observer Status to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Observer Organization to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);

to Biological Diversity (CBD) and to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

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