

## Battle for the Planet Johannesburg Declaration

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history: a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future holds great peril, and we, the People, have great responsibilities. Ten years ago, the world was swept up in a wave of optimism with the end of the Cold War and the adoption of Agenda 21 at the Rio Earth Summit. Today, however, the report on the state of the planet is overwhelming: the environment continues to deteriorate, poverty is increasing and the number of armed conflicts is on the rise. In addition, the globalizing economy appears to thwart all possibility for change. The main causes of sustainability degradation include: growing populations, which need more energy and resources; affluence, which increases material consumption and waste; poverty, which limits choices on how to use the environment; technologies, which use energy and dispose of waste inefficiently; insecurity, which leads to massive spending on military budgets and the construction of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction; and financial institutions and policies, which avoid addressing the most pressing problems and exclude stakeholders, especially women, indigenous people and the poor.

### **We, know that today:**

- 1.2 billion people live on less than \$1 a day.
- 800 million people are suffering from hunger.
- 1.5 billion human beings do not have access to safe drinking water.
- 2.5 billion people lack adequate sanitation services.
- 5 million individuals, predominantly women and children, die every year from diseases related to water quality.
- 2 billion people do not have access to electricity.
- 25 million refugees have fled their homes for ecological reasons.
- The standard of living of the average African family has decreased by 20 % in the past 10 years.
- 36 million human beings are infected with the HIV virus; 23 million of whom are living in Africa without access to any treatment.
- The average level of Overseas Development Aid is at 0.22% of GNP in OECD countries; a figure to be compared to the 0.7% which nations committed to during the Rio World Summit in 1992.
- The urban population of 2.5 billion will increase to 5 billion in the next 25 years.
- 12% of the 1.7 million known species are threatened with extinction.
- Average world temperatures are projected to increase further, by 1.2° to 3.5° C (2° to 6° F) over the course of the 21st Century, which could exacerbate flooding, fires and other natural disasters across the world, melt glaciers and the polar ice caps, raise sea levels and pose threats to hundreds of millions of coastal and island dwellers.
- The stabilization of levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to a range that is considered safe will require overall reductions in the order of 60 per cent or more in the emission of the "greenhouse gases" that are responsible for global warming.
- The known reserves of petrol and natural gas could become exhausted in the next half century.
- Developing countries lose \$10 billion a year due to imbalances and unjust trade tariffs imposed by developed countries.

We, are declaring our Planet in Danger, and accuse the self-interested politics of "business as usual" pursued by governments of creating a social, economic and ecological impasse for the six billion inhabitants of the planet today, and of compromising the survival of the 11 to 12 billion people who will likely inhabit the Earth at the end of the century.

We, Citizens of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations, and promise to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.



We, Signatories of this declaration, demand to Heads of State and Governments to:

1. Acknowledge and act on their responsibility to turn rhetoric into real action and achieve sustainable development
2. Respect the principles, commit the necessary resources, and create adequate instruments to achieve the Development Goals of the Millennium Declaration, in particular:
  - To halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day.
  - To halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who do not have access to safe drinking water.
  - To ensure, by 2015, all children complete a full course of primary education.
  - To halt, and begin to reverse, by 2015, the spread of HIV/AIDS.
  - To grant the goods produced in poor countries free access to the markets of developed countries.
3. Adopt a common ethical framework in order to achieve sustainability and to reinforce the goals established in the Millennium Declaration. To recognize the Earth Charter as a valuable contribution to the development of a shared vision of fundamental values and the creation of strong, equitable global partnerships for sustainable development.
4. Implement all principles contained in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, and enforce the principles of democracy and good governance.
5. Curb currently unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and support greatly increased research, development and implementation of renewable energy sources and other eco-efficient alternatives.
6. Create a legal basis motivating the business community to become committed agents of Sustainable Development.
7. Reform the United Nations system in order to give more power for actions, for enforcement of UN decisions, for peace and stability.
8. Ratify all International Conventions and Protocols without delay, and implement their terms with courage and determination: including those related to Climate Change, Biodiversity, Desertification, Wetlands, International Watercourses, and others.
9. Reverse the tendency of the last ten years by increasing Overseas Development Aid spending and abolishing environmentally harmful and trade-distorting subsidies, in order to allow developing countries to eliminate their crippling debts, cover their basic human and ecological needs, and have access to modern technologies that use materials and energy efficiently and with a minimum of waste. The objective of 0.7% of GDP should be reached by 2012.

*Appeal signed by:*

**Mayors of large Cities:**

**Auckland**, John Banks  
**Cap Town**, Gerald Morkel  
**Curitiba**, Cassio Taniguchi  
**Durban**, Obed Mlaba  
**London**, Ken Livingston  
**Lyon**, Gerard Collomb  
**Ouagadougou**, Simon Compaore  
**Rome**, Walter Veltroni  
**Sao Paulo**, Marta Suplicy

**Nobel Prizes:**

Mikhail **Gorbaciov**  
Rigoberta **Menchù Tum**  
Oscar **Arias Sanchez**  
Jody **Williams**  
Betty **Williams**

Rita **Levi-Montalcini**

