

FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION (QUAKERS)

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FWCC Oral Statement to be delivered at the 34th session of the Human Rights Council Panel discussion on climate change and the rights of the child

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) welcomes this panel discussion. At its heart, climate change is an intergenerational justice concern.

This panel seeks “to **enhance understanding** of the effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of the child”. Let us consider the effects.

Our children are experiencing a rate of global temperature rise approximately ten times faster than ever seen before, and a species extinction rate unprecedented in our human history. The concentration of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere is the highest in at least 3 million years. Without rapid reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, our children will likely experience a temperature rise of 4.8 degrees above preindustrial levels by the year 2100. This would transform human civilisation as we know it. However, this **does not need to happen**.

The root causes of climate change include the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, industrial agriculture and intensive livestock production. Immediate, sufficient and rights-based climate action to address the root causes is critical. As concluded by the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, rights-based approaches in climate action can result in more coherent, legitimate, and sustainable climate policies.

Human rights - including the right to life, health, food, water, adequate housing, and self-determination - articulate what is at stake. Increasing global temperatures, if not stabilized at safe levels, could also increase the threat of violence and have serious repercussions on sustaining peace.

FWCC calls upon States to be courageous and compassionate, to act urgently and justly, to protect our children and all our future generations.

We would like to ask the panel – *what is the most fundamental action, in your view, that Governments can take to safeguard child rights and reflect intergenerational equity?*