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Statement submitted by Unitarian Universalist Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2011/100.



Statement***The importance of climate change education**

The human-caused component of climate change (global warming) is a well-established scientific fact. All countries will be increasingly affected in a myriad of severe, adverse ways: economically, environmentally, militarily, politically, medically, and psychologically. Global stability is threatened. There is no safe haven.¹

There are widespread gaps in public knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of climate change, presenting a significant barrier to both mitigation and adaptation. Education is critical for climate risk management needed to inform and change behaviour and to mitigate the worst climate effects on human society.

Climate change education is necessary for developed countries to motivate strong and successful mitigation efforts, and to counter disinformation by contrarians/deniers.

Climate change education is especially challenging and important for developing countries that will be damaged most severely by climate change but have few resources.

Climate change education is needed specifically in many areas, including:

- Sustainable agriculture adaptation education to avoid reduced crop yields and food shortages from increasing temperatures, precipitation, drought, and insects;
- Public health education to cope with changed patterns and increases in disease;
- Political, legal and communications education to negotiate difficult climate agreements and policies;
- Economics education for unstable financial systems strained by climate impacts;
- Climate education in science, impacts, vulnerabilities, and mitigation strategies.

Teacher competence for climate education is a critical issue. Fortunately some course material is already available at different levels that can fit individual and regional needs.²

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

¹ Based on Committee on Sustainable Development of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, "Climate change: summary and recommendations to Governments" (2011).

² See e.g. the Unitarian Universalist-United Nations Office Climate Portal at <http://climate.uu-uno.org/topics/view/24422/> and <http://climate.uu-uno.org/topics/view/44236/>.