

SENIORS FOR CLIMATE ACTION NOW!

SCAN! Fridays for Future Solidarity Statement

March 19 Climate Strike Global Day of Action

Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!) is a newly formed Ontario-based organization seeking to inform and mobilize seniors in an effort to address the climate emergency. We recognize that climate action is also a call for social justice and economic transformation - the opportunity, as well as the need, to address racism and economic inequities.

This year's Climate Strike Global Day of Action's theme is #NomoreEmptyPromises.

As seniors, we have born witness to those empty promises for longer than most. We are committed to facing the climate emergency and to fight for climate justice.

We support the young leaders of Fridays for Future and stand with them in demanding action now.

What's the emergency?

This pandemic offers us a disquieting glimpse into future emergencies including future pandemics.

But the Liberal government's response to the climate crisis is wholly inadequate. Although they introduced a climate action plan in 2020 (A Healthy environment in a Healthy economy), a close reading reveals that the plan will not allow Canada to even meet our old Paris Agreement targets.

These targets are critical. The UN general secretary called the NDC Assessment Report (see sidebar) a "red alert" for the planet. Scientists have called for a 45% reduction in Greenhouse gases (GhGs) by 2030 compared to 2010. The UN has calculated that the effort by the 78 countries that have submitted plans will likely lead to less than a 1% reduction in emissions.

We are in trouble.

This is the year of COP 26. We need to build a critical mass of public pressure to dramatically change course.

Our governments' role

The problem is that neither the federal government nor the provincial government is prepared to take the necessary steps to prevent disaster. In fact, we consider the Ontario government to be guilty of obstruction in dealing with the climate emergency – a climate crime.

The bottom line: the federal government is clearly not prepared to divest from fossil fuels and rethink our economy. We need to create not just a recovery from the pandemic, but a different kind of economy where we address overconsumption and economic inequities. It is time to stop building more (pipeline) infrastructure to prop up a dying industry.

Why "climate justice"?

Climate justice addresses the people and communities most vulnerable to climate impacts. Indigenous peoples are disproportionately impacted by the ecological destruction caused by fossil fuel extraction and transportation in their traditional territories. Indigenous, working class, racialized, poor and marginalized people are suffering - and will continue to suffer the most, unless we force our elected representatives to act.

The current pandemic illustrates the impacts on these communities.

Seniors have suffered the highest number of casualties, but we refuse to be silenced. We stand side by side with young activists to demand change.

The Role of Media

It is increasingly urgent that the public be made aware that we are in a crisis. The media cannot be neutral. Language is political.

For that reason, we call on the media to:

- consistently identify the relationship between "natural" disasters and climate heating
- consistently adopt the terms "climate crisis" and "climate emergency"
- consistently make the link between climate disasters - freezes, fires and floods - and the climate emergency
- recognize the effects of profound environmental destruction resulting in impacts such as the elimination of natural habitats and the rise in zoonotic diseases

Today we call on all individuals and organizations to be actively vigilant with regard to media language. Send e-mails, letters to the editor and use social media until they get it right.

Speak out! Stand up! #NomoreEmptyPromises

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty adopted by 196 Parties at the Conference of the Parties (COP) 21. Each country is to outline and communicate their post-2020 climate actions: Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs).

In February of this year, the UN released its initial [NDC Assessment Report](#) about meeting 2030 targets. Seventy eight countries had submitted their more ambitious NDC pledges by the December 31st deadline. Canada had not.

SCAN!

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