

16 April, 2019

NO to Nuclear as Climate Solution, YES to Renewables and People Powered Solutions

CSO message of concern at the conclusion of the April 1-3 2019 Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (informally the Climate & SDGs Synergy Conference), organized by UN DESA and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Energy, Utilities and Climate, Denmark.

Attention to the Secretariats of UNDESA and UNFCCC Co-organising the Climate-SDGs Synergy conference in April 1-3, 2019, Copenhagen

UNDESA secretariat, UN Building, 405 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017, USA.

undesa@un.org att Hon. Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General; Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director, SDGs; Ms. Marion Barthélemy, Director, Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development.

UNFCCC secretariat, P.O. Box 260124, D-53153 Bonn, Germany. secretariat@unfccc.int,

att. Hon. Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary; UNFCCC Climate-Observer-Organizations-Liaison Secretariat: cool@unfccc.int

Climate-SDGs Synergy Conference Secretariat at UNDESA & UNFCCC: att. Bo Fu fub@un.org

We, as representatives of civil society, send a clear message to you today upon conclusion of the Climate & SDGs Synergy Conference, that nuclear energy cannot be part of the just transition we seek towards a healthy and peaceful planet.

We should not, in the fight against climate change, build up new scenes for possible nuclear catastrophes, in a time, when renewable technologies are readily available, cheaper and safe.

Members of our networks attending the Conference were dismayed and concerned with the space and credence given to the IAEA, in participation, flyers and in at least two panels, one on 1 April entitled on 'Synergies in action (II): Promoting cross-sectoral integrated response for a just transition'. During this panel, a participant from INFORSE, a representative of many environmental and women's rights networks, shared concerns and the unequivocal rejection of nuclear energy. A fellow panellist, Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, representative of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change, echoed these concerns – speaking about the serious issues connected to safety, uranium mining, waste etc, and concerns of introducing the technology in Africa. ***Renewable energy technologies are available, cheaper, quicker and safe climate solutions.***

Unfortunately, when it came time to summarize sessions of the last day, it was simply reported that the issue of nuclear energy was 'discussed' and not that *CSOs, women and indigenous peoples' representatives had **rejected nuclear energy as a climate solution***, which is the clear message we send you today, and which we reminded the organizers of in the concluding plenary panel.

We have continued to witness, in spaces such as this conference and at the UNFCCC, the nuclear industry's aggressive lobbying especially focussed towards developing countries,

based on **false information** about the **true cost of nuclear energy and its real safety risks**. Nuclear energy is a health risk, and damages valuable resources and ecosystems that are commons for all people. *This industry needs **accountability, phasing out**, rather than promotion.*

Some, during the meeting, gave platitudes to the need for 'transformation' and 'radical thinking' but it is unthinkable in this context we are still considering such a dangerous and unsafe technology as a potential 'climate solution' – at a cost of other viable solutions.

Among many results of the conference, one discussion focused on the establishment of a **"Clean-Energy Investment Coalition"**. Given the context of inputs to the conference, and the IEA's representative's comment in plenary, we are very concerned about how this coalition being used to also promote unsafe and unsustainable technologies like nuclear and 'clean' fossil fuels.

This Coalition must not do that and we demand establishing safeguards. Transformation requires that **investment towards a low-carbon society must be** put towards **scaling available renewable technologies**, mass dissemination and research, enhanced efficiency and storage, as well as upgraded infrastructure and fit-for-purpose regulation.

*Advancing **nuclear power** in countries that lack technical infrastructure creates **huge risks for accidents and nuclear contaminations** due to lack of capacity and risks of corruption, as well as additional **security threats**. The **devastating effects of uranium mining** and the **unsolved waste** issues are further serious concerns.*

People Powered Solutions – CSOs, Women, Youth ..

In addition to concern for those given space to speak in the conference, in the name of "do not leave anybody behind", we were also concerned with *which groups and what issues seemingly were not, CSOs, and primarily **women's rights groups***. There was very little space set aside for real **meaningful dialogue** beyond the panels, and though a focus on collaborative coalitions, this seemed to be very much focused on engagement with the private sector. There seemed to be a lot of 'lip service' to the critical importance of youth, without any concrete recommendations or discussions on how to transform systems **to ensure youth voices** at the decision-making table. Finally, we saw some **stark gender imbalances** on several panels, and particularly in the 'high-level' sessions on Day 1.

There continues to be a **missed opportunity to hear from CSOs, grassroots and people powered solutions** towards transformation, which should drive a conference such as this towards the future development, not be an afterthought or a side conversation. **We from CSOs**, have the knowledge, experience and are **ready to contribute to partnerships to gain the benefits of the Climate and SDGs synergies**.

Yours Sincerely,

The Women's Major Group (WMG) for Sustainable Development
Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) of UNFCCC
INFORSE International Network for Sustainable Energy

For additional questions, inputs please contact:

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The Women's Major Group (WMG) for Sustainable Development - official participant in the United Nations processes on Sustainable Development. WMG is focal point for UN-DESA, ECOSOC, General Assembly for all UN Sustainable Development policies.

WMG was established at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where governments recognized Women as one of the nine important groups in society for achieving sustainable development. WMG has 8 Organising Partners. There are over 1300 listserv members who are organisations and individuals that contribute to intergovernmental negotiations on gender and sustainable development. www.womenmajorgroup.org .

Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) of UNFCCC –one of the nine stakeholder groups of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

WGC is platform for observer organizations working to ensure women's rights and gender justice within the climate change convention framework.

Established in 2009, WGC consists of 27 women's and environmental civil society organizations, who are working to ensure that women's voices are heard and their rights prioritized in the fight against climate change. The Women and Gender Constituency represents hundreds and thousands of people across the globe, with advocates from over 60 countries working for gender justice within the UNFCCC. womengenderclimate.org .

INFORSE International Network for Sustainable Energy is a global network of 155 independent non-governmental organizations working for sustainable energy solutions to protect the environment, and to reduce poverty. INFORSE's vision is a world where energy services that are necessary for a just and human centered development, are provided in a sustainable way using renewable energy.

INFORSE was established in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. INFORSE has Civil Society Consultative Status at ECOSOC since 1998 and UNFCCC since 2002. INFORSE has a been organising side events, exhibitions at several UNFCCC conferences promoting local rural climate solutions, and 100% renewable energy scenarios. www.inforse.org