

Message
by Ecumenical Patriarch
Bartholomew
to the United Nations Climate
Change Talks in Bangkok, Thailand
(Sept. 28 - Oct. 9, 2009)

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In view of the international negotiations on climate change commencing in Bangkok, Thailand, and only two months before the crucial United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, we urge the international community to undertake courageous commitments for the prevention of the most severe consequences of global warming.

The accomplishment of a good agreement within the framework of the international negotiations in Copenhagen does not solely constitute a moral imperative for the conservation of God's creation. It is also a route for economic and social sustainability. Taking action against climate change should not be understood as a financial burden, but as an important opportunity for a healthier planet, to the benefit of all humanity and particularly of those states whose economic development is lagging behind.

We pray for the achievement of the best possible international agreement during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen, so that the industrialized countries undertake generous commitments for a total reduction of the polluting greenhouse gas emissions by 40% until 2020, compared to the 1990 levels, as well as for the provision of important financial support to the developing countries.

The urgency of the situation and the progress of science and technology pave the way for a low-carbon global economy, the development of renewable energy sources and the aversion of further deforestation. We all need to collaborate, in order to make sure that our children will be able to enjoy the goods of the earth, which we bequeath to them. We need to secure justice and love in all aspects of economic activity; profit and more specifically short-term profit making cannot and should not constitute the sole incentive of our deeds, specifically when it undermines our common and God-given natural heritage.