

Ecumenical Patriarch urges world leaders to step up action to meet Paris Climate Agreement targets



The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, on Thursday addressed a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, urging him and all international leaders to accelerate efforts aimed at Paris Climate Agreement targets.

In his letter, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, states: “...In view of the Climate Action Summit, we urge you and all leaders of the international community to increase the ambition and accelerate the progress toward meeting the decarbonization targets of the Paris Agreement, as well as to begin looking beyond to the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change’s indisputable imperative for net-zero emissions as soon as possible.

“Furthermore, we encourage the world’s economically developed countries to provide the necessary financial support to developing countries in order to facilitate a socially equitable and efficient transition to an environmentally sustainable and climate-friendly course of development.”

Below you can read the full letter of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I:

Your Excellency António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

We are encouraged by the work that Your Excellency has done to combat climate change during your tenure as Secretary-General of the United Nations and look forward to the further advancement of the response of the international community to this crisis at the upcoming Climate Action Summit. This noble initiative has the potential to reinforce and enforce a solid framework for a post-carbon era along a socially just pathway to its consequent challenges. We are reminded of the nine symposia we hosted on the environment, two of which were co-hosted with your predecessor, His Excellency Kofi Annan

In view of the Climate Action Summit, we urge you and all leaders of the international community to increase the ambition and accelerate the progress toward meeting the decarbonization targets of the Paris Agreement, as well as to begin looking beyond to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s indisputable imperative for net zero emissions as soon as possible. Furthermore, we encourage the world’s economically developed countries to provide the necessary financial support to developing countries in order to facilitate a socially equitable and efficient transition to an environmentally sustainable and climate-friendly course of development. While investment models can be successful, charitable giving must not be overlooked.

This year marks the 30th Anniversary since the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s first encyclical on the protection of the environment. Along the way, the Vatican and the Anglican Communion, as well as the World Council of Churches, have embraced and endorsed September 1st as a global day of prayer for the environment. Through our annual encyclicals, we implore the global community to work together to save the planet. We are convinced that governments, universities, businesses, civil society, people of faith and all people of good will must unite behind science in a determined and harmonious effort to save God’s creation from human-induced climate change, which is now threatening the natural world and human livelihoods at an unprecedented scale. Now more than ever humanity must stand above all

cultural and other differences – be they national or religious divisions, historic and partisan enmities, economic and personal interests – in order to ensure a bright future for our children and for generations yet to come.

Finally, please know that our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is in General Consultative Status through ECOSOC and represents the Orthodox Church at the United Nations. Thus, we are prepared to partner in advocacy for the protection of our precious environment.

Thanking Your Excellency for your sincere consideration of our request, we convey to you our Patriarchal prayers and best wishes for the climate saving deliberations at the New York Summit on September 23, 2019.

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the tenth of September, 2019

Prayerfully yours,

✙ Bartholomew

Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch