



PRESS RELEASE

YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS DEMAND GREATER ROLE IN CLIMATE CRISIS DECISION-MAKING

Three organizations have dispatched a letter to Minister of Foreign Affairs Karen Cummings MP calling for young people to be better informed and consulted about climate crisis-related matters. Policy Forum Guyana (PFG), the UG Geographical Society (UGGS) and the UG Female Empowerment Movement (UGFEM) took this step in conjunction with global actions by young people to pressure Governments into more meaningful action.

The text of the letter reads:

“Dear Minister Cummings,

The climate is in crisis. Forests are on fire, oceans poisoned and wildlife face extinction around the world. Already countless people across the globe are faced with the devastating impacts of climate change unless political leaders act urgently to change our trajectory.

To date, we in Guyana, have avoided shattering environmental events such as recently devastated the Bahamas but changing weather patterns will inevitably come our way. One such event could permanently transform our low-lying coastal regions for the worst. Are we ready for this?

Previous generations and political leaders have failed to ensure that our generation has a future to look forward to. They are leaving the burden of creating the change we need to us and our peers around the world.

Under the banner of the Global Climate Strike, our organizations are calling on the Government of Guyana to embrace the opportunity provided by the UN 2019 Climate Summit starting on Monday, September 23rd to address the climate crisis. This Summit seeks to challenge states, regions, cities, companies, investors and citizens to step up action in all matters related to the climate crisis.

We are calling on the Government of Guyana to take steps to prioritize climate justice by protecting not only human life but also promoting a world that respects all living beings. In

keeping with this goal, we also call for the government of Guyana to pay particular attention to the following specific priorities:

- *Young people need to know the facts and be updated about the climate crisis in a language which everybody can understand.*
- *Our education system is not preparing us for the world we will inherit. We need to be equipped for the kind of jobs required by the world we're about to enter.*
- *The Government must communicate to the general public in a more direct and purposeful way to bring our habits and lifestyles in line with climate constraints.*

Young people in Guyana are constantly referred to as the hope for the future and legally allowed to vote at eighteen years. However, no one treats eighteen-year-olds as adults, except the criminal justice system. This is no longer acceptable, young people must be allowed to influence decision-making, especially on climate-related issues.

*Our organizations in cooperation with young people around the world are holding a rally to mark the end of the Global Climate Strike week on **Sunday, September 29th starting at 3.00pm outside of the Bank of Guyana Building** and ending at the Sea-Wall Bandstand."*

The letter was signed by Benita Davis of the Policy Forum Guyana on behalf of the three organizations.

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