



Health & Military Conference

ACTION PACK FOR GCCA PARTNERS

Background:

On Monday 17th October 2011 a conference in London will bring together leading doctors, scientists and security experts to discuss the health and security implications of climate change. Climate change is the greatest current threat to public health and also the greatest future threat to security, and this conference is borne of an unlikely alliance – between health leaders and military experts - who see the urgent need to take action. The meeting will highlight the synergies that exist between these two areas of interest and some of the solutions that could be implemented to take effective action at the national and international level.

This is an opportunity to present climate change to new audiences, with delivery from trusted messengers in the form of medical professionals, scientists and security experts. We are asking GCCA partners to help us in disseminating these messages via your networks, email lists and social media so that we can reach as many people as possible. Based on the conference statement, and to assist you in spreading this message, this Action Pack has been prepared which contains sample tweets, sample Facebook posts, a sample blog post, as well as information on where you can go to access the statement from the conference, see who endorsed it and how you can endorse it yourself.

Our partners at OneWorld / OneClimate TV will be doing video interviews with medical and military experts all day throughout the conference, planning to make them available to you during and after the conference for embedding in your blogs and websites. We are also planning to provide you with a sample blog post to go along with the other material. More information on the conference and the conference statement are at: <http://climatechange.bmj.com/>

If you have any queries, please contact Manish Joshi at manish.joshi@tcktcktck.org

Sample Tweets:

Global health and military leaders agree: climate change is real and it is happening now.
<http://bit.ly/nLfDO7> #EU

Leaders issue call to action: "Climate change poses an immediate, growing and grave threat to the health & security of people around the globe." <http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>

A low-carbon future will save lives and save money - up to €80 billion a year in healthcare costs alone.
<http://bit.ly/nLfDO7> #health #climate #EU

Health and military leaders issue rare statement on urgency of addressing global climate change.
<http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>

Health & military leaders: "Climate change is a global problem that demands a global solution"
<http://bit.ly/nLfDO7> #COP17

For the health of our planet, for the future of our countries, leaders urge action on climate change
<http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>

Suggested hashtags: #climate #health #EU #COP17

Twitter usernames of EU leaders:

- @Nov10gov | Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, United Kingdom
- @nicolassarkozy | President Nicolas Sarkozy, France
- @berlusconi | Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Italy
- @DagboekMP | Prime Minister Mark Rutte, Netherlands
- @PolandMFA | Prime Minister Donald Tusk, Poland
- @fredrikreinfeld | Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, Sweden

Sample Facebook Posts:

You may not realize it now, but climate change touches every aspect of your life. It is extreme weather, increased risk of disease, a threat to food security, and to energy access. At a global summit in London today experts in health and security discussed the best way to address the growing challenge of climate change. Their seven point plan for action is below: <http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>

Want to fight hunger? Tackle energy independence? Prevent disease? Experts in health and security agree there's one way to take on all these challenges and win. Stop climate change. Read their statement: <http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>

Today medical and security experts gathered in London to join the global call for bold climate action. Their seven step plan is ambitious, exciting and completely achievable. Can world leaders make steps towards it at the next UN climate summit in Durban? <http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>

We have heard calls for climate action from environmentalists, from faith leaders, from international politicians. Now we're hearing it from our doctors and generals. How many more people have to join the call before governments will finally take sufficient action? <http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>

Sample Blog Post:

Unusual Alliance: Medical and Military Experts Issue Joint Climate Warning

Today in London, leading doctors, scientists and security experts met at a high-level conference to discuss the 'Health and Security Perspectives of Climate Change'.

Although this conference is borne of an unlikely alliance, these leaders share the same views on climate change and see it as much more than just an environmental challenge: for them, it is the greatest current threat to public health and also the greatest future threat to security.

Together these experts discussed initiatives and climate solutions from within their respective fields, exploring how they can drive implementation at both the national and international levels.

Following the close of the conference, attendees and supporters released a statement co-signed by international health and military experts and representatives of whole range of organizations working on climate change.

In the statement (URL: <http://bit.ly/nLfDO7>), which will also be published in the British Medical Journal, they call upon governments around the world to prioritise efforts to address the causes and impacts of climate change.

Specifically, they urge the European Union to unconditionally agree a target to cut emissions domestically by 30% by 2020, and to prepare further targets towards 2050 which would incentivise the a low-carbon transformation of the economy.

Going beyond the EU, the conference statement calls on all developed countries to adopt more ambitious emission reduction targets, to increase their support for low carbon development, and to invest in further research into the impact of climate change on health and security.

The signatories also urge developing countries to actively identify the key ways in which climate change threatens health and democratic governance, and to undertake mitigation and adaptation activities domestically.

Identifying fossil fuels as a main driver for climate change, they also call on governments to enact legislation to stop the building of new unabated coal-fired power stations, advocating a phase out of existing plants, especially lignite generation which is seen as most harmful to human health.

One similarity between human health, national security and climate change was pointed out by several experts at the conference: we can't afford to wait until it's too late, and early action is the best way to prevent fatal consequences.

Conference Statement:

To see who endorsed the statement or to endorse it yourself, please go to:
<http://climatechange.bmj.com/statement>

Statement calling for urgent action on climate change

Leading doctors and security experts meeting at a conference on the health and security implications of Climate Change in London on 17th October 2011 issued the following statement:-

Full Statement

Climate change poses an immediate, growing and grave threat to the health and security of people in both developed and developing countries around the globe.

Climate change leads to more frequent and extreme weather events and to conditions that favour the spread of infectious diseases. Rising sea levels, floods and droughts cause loss of habitat, water and food shortages, and threats to livelihood. These trigger conflict within and between countries.

Humanitarian crises will further burden military resources through the need for rescue missions and aid. Mass migration will also increase, triggered by both environmental stress and conflict, thus leading to serious further security issues. It will often not be possible to adapt meaningfully to these changes, and the economic cost will be enormous. As in medicine, prevention is the best solution.

Action to tackle climate change not only reduces the risks to our environment and global stability but also offers significant health co-benefits. Changes in power generation improve air quality. Modest life style changes – such as increasing physical activity through walking and cycling - will cut rates of heart disease and stroke, obesity, diabetes, breast cancer, dementia and depressive illness. Climate change mitigation policies would thus significantly cut rates of premature death and disability for hundreds of millions of people around the world.

The health co-benefits of lower carbon use save money: reducing EU greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2020 (compared to 1990 levels) would save over €80 billion a year in healthcare costs and through increased productivity of a healthier workforce.

We therefore call upon governments around the world to prioritise efforts to address the causes and impacts of climate change. Specifically we urge:

The European Union to unconditionally agree a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions domestically by 30% by 2020, and to prepare further targets towards 2050 which would incentivise the decarbonisation of the economy.

Developed countries to adopt more ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets, to increase their support for low carbon development and to invest in further research into the impact of climate change on health and security.

Developing countries to actively identify the key ways in which climate change threatens health and democratic governance, as well as undertaking mitigation and adaptation activities, including through supported and unsupported NAMAs.

All governments to enact legislative and regulatory change to stop the building of new unabated coal-fired power stations and phase out the continuing operation of existing plants prioritising lignite generation as most harmful to health.

All parties at the climate change conference in Durban, South Africa, to strive to adopt an ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction agreement consistent with the target of restricting the global temperature rise to 2°C as agreed in Copenhagen and Cancun, and in line with the pending UNFCCC review towards a 1.5°C limit above preindustrial levels. A mechanism ensuring that all people can share equitably the benefits of a safe atmosphere without penalising those with the least historical responsibility for climate change must be established.

All governments to incorporate the UN Security Council Presidential statement from 20 July 2011 on the potential consequences of climate change on security into their short and long term security planning.

All governments to strive to adopt climate change mitigation targets and policies that are more ambitious than their international commitments.