INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GEODESY AND GEOPHYSICS
UNION GEODESIQUE ET GEOPHYSIQUE INTERNATIONALE

STATEMENT

The Earth's climate and responsibilities of scientists and their governments to promote sustainable development

Adopted by the IUGG Bureau on 12 June 2017

Speaking for the international Earth and Space scientific community and for the National Members of the Union, the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) is dismayed that the United States (US) seeks to renegotiate, or withdraw from, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. This decision will potentially have a significant impact on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and specifically its Sustainable Development Goal 13 "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts". The world expects that scientific excellence and scientific knowledge will be incorporated into decision-making and that internationally binding decisions, once made, will be honored by governments and their successors.

To reach the ambitious goals of the Paris agreement, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework are needed to support capacity building in developing countries. Failure to do this will delay climate change mitigation. Thus, IUGG believes that the decision to terminate US funding to the Green Climate Fund is as damaging, or more damaging than a potential US withdrawal from the Paris agreement, because individual countries can benefit from the Fund set up with a recognition of climate change as a global problem and the need for participation in a multilateral framework.

We remind the international scientific community that in 2007 the IUGG General Assembly in Perugia, Italy, urged nations collectively to sharply reduce global atmospheric emissions of greenhouse gases and absorbing aerosols, with the goal of urgently halting their accumulation in the atmosphere and holding atmospheric levels at their lowest practicable value; and urged organizations around the world to join with IUGG and its member Associations to encourage scientists to communicate freely and widely with public and private decision-makers about the consequences and risks of on-going climate change and actions that can be taken to limit climate change and promote adaptation. In 2015, the IUGG General Assembly in Prague, Czech Republic, urged national and scientific leaders of all nations to recognize the substantial benefits to the overall well-being and economic progress, both nationally and globally, that will accrue through advancing the scientific understanding of, and the capabilities for predicting potentially disruptive environmental consequences and extremes.

IUGG scientists and affiliates work with the global community including industries and government organizations to provide sound information on the regional and country specific impacts. They value global cohesiveness in advancing the science and in dealing with issues, because building knowledge and helping humanity is best accomplished by working together. By withdrawing from a leadership role, the United States has lost the opportunity to help reduce emissions.

IUGG therefore encourages the United States to continue to meet the aspirations of the Paris Agreement through the efforts of the states, cities, industries and citizens.

(*The statement was drafted by the IUGG Union Commission on Climatic and Environmental Change in co-operation with the IUGG's International Association of Meteorology and Atmospheric Sciences.*)

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) is the oldest non-governmental international scientific organization, established in 1919 and dedicated to advancing, promoting, and communicating knowledge of the Earth system, its space environment, and the dynamical processes causing change. IUGG is comprised of eight International Associations dealing with cryospheric sciences (IACS), geodesy (IAG), geomagnetism and aeronomy (IAGA), hydrology (IAHS), meteorology and atmospheric sciences (IAMAS), oceanography (IAPSO), seismology (IASPEI), volcanology (IAVCEI) as well as physics and chemistry of the Earth's interior, solar-terrestrial relations, and analogous problems associated with the Moon and other planets. IUGG encourages the application of this knowledge to societal needs, such as mitigation of natural hazards, climate change, environmental preservation, mineral and water resources (http://www.IUGG.org)