

Copenhagen, January 2010

Dear Yvo De Boer,

We are writing as organisations accredited with UNFCCC ‘Observer’ status to complain about the treatment that many of our delegates experienced at the hands of the Danish police during the COP 15 climate negotiations in Copenhagen, and to ask the UNFCCC to take a series of actions.

We are looking into making a request for an investigation by OIOS. We are in the process of gathering a number of eyewitness accounts from accredited delegates, including reports of:

- Being arrested during the Saturday 12th December march, kept for hours in freezing conditions on the street without being able to attend to basic human needs and then released 12 hours later with no charges being brought against them
- Being kicked and beaten with truncheons by police during an attempt by delegates to leave the grounds of the conference centre to join the ‘People’s Assembly’ as part of the Reclaim Power event on the 16th December
- Being arrested by undercover police officers on leaving the Bella Centre
- Detained protesters being pepper-sprayed while being held in cages.

A number of accredited observers are still being held by the police under charges, which seem to be motivated by the fact that the people in question had been visibly critical of the direction that the COP process was taking.

We also note that on Tuesday 15th of December, when Tadzio Mueller was arrested by plain clothes police officers on leaving the Bella Centre, he was immediately escorted back inside, suggesting some degree of cooperation between the police and the UNFCCC in the arrest.

This is unacceptable. Civil society plays an important role both inside and outside the UN climate negotiations. Article 6 of the UNFCCC requires Parties to promote and facilitate public participation in addressing climate change and its effects and developing adequate responses. The actions of the Danish police in using such disproportionate force in Copenhagen to silence the voices of protesters represents a distressing episode in what is supposed to be a democratic process. We are therefore calling on the UNFCCC to:

- Publicly condemn the actions of the Danish police in using such disproportionate force on climate change protesters.
- Call for an independent investigation in Denmark as to what human rights violations may have been caused by the police force in the use of their new powers of pre-emptive arrest.
- Disclose what cooperation took place between the UNFCCC and the Danish police in carrying out their repression of climate change activists.
- Call for the release of those climate change protesters who are still being detained.
- Take public provisions to ensure that similar police repression does not take place at future UNFCCC meetings.

Yours sincerely,

Amélie Canonne, ATTAC France

Ana Filippini, World Rainforest Movement accredited under Gender CC

Anne Petermann, Global Justice Project, USA

Bente Hessellund Andersen, NOAH - Friends of the Earth Denmark

Bhola Bhattarai, National Forum For Advocacy, Nepal

Brid Brennan, the Transnational Institute, the Netherlands

Ellie Cijvat, Friends of the Earth Sweden

Fabio Stevenato, Federation of Young European Greens

Gopal Dayaneni, Movement Generation, USA

Helena Paul, EcoNexus, UK

Hemantha Withanage, Centre for Environmental Justice, Sri Lanka

Isabelle del Forge, La Via Campesina, accredited through EHNE

Jane Trowell, PLATFORM, UK, accredited through the Transnational Institute
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Joshua Kahn Russell, on behalf of RAN – Rainforest action network.
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