

“LES CICÉRONNADES”

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Anglais – LYCÉE – Texte en prose

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Rarely in human history have so many people around the world placed their trust in so few. Your deliberations over the next two weeks will decide the fate not only of those alive today, but also of generations yet unborn.

So I can only urge you to think of your grandchildren, as I think of mine, and of those billions of people without a voice; those for whom hope is the rarest of sensations; those for whom a secure life is a distant prospect. Most of all, I urge you to consider the needs of the youngest generation, because none of us has the right to assume that “for our today they should give up their tomorrow.”

On an increasingly crowded planet, humanity faces many threats – but none is greater than climate change. It magnifies every hazard and tension of our existence. It threatens our ability to feed ourselves; to remain healthy and safe from extreme weather; to manage the natural resources that support our economies, and to avert the humanitarian disaster of mass migration and increasing conflict.

In damaging our climate we become the architects of our own destruction. While the planet can survive the scorching of the earth and the rising of the waters, the human race cannot. The absurd thing is that we know exactly what needs to be done; we know we cannot adapt sufficiently to go on as we are, nor can we build ourselves a new atmosphere. To avoid catastrophe we must restrict climate change to less than two degrees, which requires a dramatic reduction in carbon emissions. This can be done. We have the knowledge, the tools and the money. [...] So I pray that in pursuing National interest you will not lose sight of the International necessity. [...]

Extract from the speech by HRH Charles, Prince of Wales for COP 21 Opening session, November 30th 2015