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NGO activists demonstrate at UN Climate conference in Warsaw

Warsaw, Poland (PANA) – Supporters from non-governmental organizations across the globe on Saturday marched through the city centre, near where the UN climate negotiations are taking place in Warsaw, Poland, to demand movement from policy-makers against catastrophic climate change and to also honour the 'Arctic 30'.

It was announced recently that the 30 men and women detained on the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise, after a peaceful protest against oil drilling in the icy Arctic, could remain in jail in Russia for at least another three months.

"While we March we're remembering that, with each step we take, 30 of us are illegally detained – they are not walking alongside us because of the courageous stand they have taken to defend what we, and they, hold dear," Martin Kaiser, head of delegation for Greenpeace International at the UN Climate talks, said on Saturday.

Greenpeace International charged that following the devastation in the Philippines by Typhoon Haiyan, the world's governments at the climate negotiations in Warsaw have so far rejected the opportunity to act.

The organization cited the Japanese and Australian governments who they said have chosen this moment to tear up their existing promises, while giving their full attention to the oil, coal and gas industry.

Kaiser said instead of stopping new investments into coal mining and oil drilling and investing in renewable energies, Japan and Australia reneged on their voluntary pledges from 2010.

"They have ignored the interests of their own citizens, the pleas of the victims of climate change, and the warnings of scientists, economists and trade unionists, to address the climate crisis which is engulfing us.

"Policy-makers and officials here need to take a page from the story of these men and women who acted bravely and decisively to draw the world's attention to the reckless greed of the fossil fuel industry. The Arctic 30 are not pirates. They are not hooligans. They acted entirely peacefully to protect the unique environment of the Arctic, and to protect all of us from the devastating impacts of climate change. The Arctic 30, and all those who stand against climate change, those who have lost their freedom, and in some cases their lives to protect the climate – they are the true heroes of our movement. We march with them, and for them," said Kaiser.

He called on ministers who will start meeting next week to stop what he said was the downward spiral of the UN climate talks and commit to bold mitigation targets and climate finance pledges which will help everyone and the transition towards renewable energies, adding that policy makers must show leadership.

Vladimir Chuprow, Climate Campaigner of Greenpeace Russia, said they need the help of everyone to free their friends from jail, and to free everyone from a dangerous dependence on the fossil fuel industry which is polluting the planet and stealing the future.

"We hope that the diversity of the groups attending this march is a clear message to the Polish government, as well as the governments of Europe and the world, that further inaction in the light of accelerating climate change is unacceptable for the electorate," Maciek Muskat, Director of Greenpeace Poland, stated.

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2013-11-16 16:55:18