MEDICAL WARNING: GLOBAL WARMING

TO: PRESIDENT CLINTON AND Yeltsin, Chancellor Kohl, and Prime Ministers Blair, Hashimoto, Jospin, Chirac, and other heads of state and government attending the Earth Summit.

As physicians and health professionals, increasingly concerned by the public's lack of awareness of the potential health impacts stemming from climate change, we call upon you to address this issue in your capacity as world leaders so as to prevent the loss of millions of lives and to avoid the crisis it poses for the environment.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, made up of some 1,300 scientists and policymakers, has concluded in its fourth assessment report that the balance of evidence suggests a discernible human influence on global warming. It has also highlighted the potential health impacts of climate change. The report states that climate change is already occurring and that it is likely to further accelerate in the future. It projects that the global average surface temperature may increase by 1.8°C to 4°C (3.2°F to 7.2°F) and that precipitation patterns may change, increasing the risk of droughts and floods in some regions. This increase in temperature and changes in precipitation patterns will have profound health impacts.

- Increased mortality and morbidity from heat-related deaths and injuries.
- Increased incidence of vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and Rift Valley fever.
- Increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters, such as floods and hurricanes, leading to increased injuries and deaths.
- Increased occurrence of dietary deficiencies and malnutrition, especially in vulnerable populations.
- Increased mental health issues, including depression and anxiety, due to changes in lifestyle and the environment.
- Increased risk of infectious diseases due to changes in climate and weather patterns.

We, therefore, urge you to take immediate action to combat global warming and to address the health impacts of climate change. This includes:

1. Taking strong and immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy.
2. Investing in research and development to develop and implement innovative solutions to climate change and its health impacts.
3. Strengthening global health systems and infrastructure to better respond to the health impacts of climate change.
4. Increasing public awareness and education about the health impacts of climate change and the importance of addressing it as a global priority.
5. Working together with other countries and organizations to share knowledge, resources, and expertise.

We remain committed to working with you and other health professionals to address this critical issue and to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations.

Sincerely,

[Signatures of medical and health professionals]

[Note: This letter was submitted to the leaders of the G7 and the G20 countries at the time.]