FWCC divests from fossil fuels

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Worldwide Quaker Group Divests from Fossil Fuels

LONDON, 30 Sept. 2015 – Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) announces that it has divested from fossil fuel companies, following a June 2015 decision of its Central Executive Committee. The money divested from fossil fuels has been redirected to a fund supporting wind energy projects. The organisation, headquartered in London, represents some 400,000 Quakers in meetings and churches organisations in 87 countries. The action follows the organisation’s 2012 “Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-Justice,” which recognised the dangers of climate change and its effect on famine, migrations, and war, and pledged to act to reduce the organisation’s climate impact. Other Quaker meetings and organisations have also divested from fossil fuels, including the Religious Society of Friends in Britain and the Philadelphia-based Friends Fiduciary Corporation. The Central Executive Committee recognised the value of joining with other churches and religious organisations in divesting from fossil fuels before the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference in Paris. At the same time, the Committee acknowledged “the ethical discomfort created by . . . still utilising fossil fuels for transport and other uses in our daily lives and in our organisational work.”

Elizabeth Cazden, Clerk of the Central Executive Committee, commented, “The core work of FWCC is to bring Quakers together from all parts of the world, for person-to-person sharing that strengthens our spiritual bonds. We are also committed to a governance structure that includes Friends from all parts of the world, not just those within easy reach of the London office. So it is particularly challenging to envision how to do our work without adding to fossil fuel consumption such as jet fuel. We are actively exploring options such as holding international meetings less frequently, having committees meet by videoconferencing, and incorporating carbon offsets such as tree-planting projects.”

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For more information:

FWCC
Notes to editors

ABOUT FWCC: FWCC, founded in 1937, is a consultative body that brings together members of the Religious Society of Friends worldwide, across differences of theology, language, and culture. Its goal is to encourage and strengthen spiritual life within the Religious Society of Friends, and its outreach in the world. Its affiliated meetings contain an estimated 400,000 individual members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) on all continents. It holds meetings of representatives every three to five years to discuss matters of common interest, promotes intervisitation among Quaker groups, and represents Quakers in worldwide ecumenical and interfaith organisations. The next World Plenary meeting of approximately 350 FWCC representatives will be held in Pisac, Peru, January 19 to 27, 2016. FWCC has four regional Sections which separately manage their own finances and investments. The action announced today controls only investments held by the World Office, located in London. For more information see http://www.fwcc.world.

The 2012 “Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-Justice” was adopted at a World Conference of approximately 850 representatives of Quaker meetings throughout the world, held at Kabarak University, Nakuru, Kenya, in April 2012. The full text is at http://www.fwcc.world/call.pdf.