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Headline: PH ready to lead climate change fight, says Legarda

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Sen. Loren Legarda CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Sen. Loren Legarda said the Philippines is ready to lead the fight to combat climate change in her speech during the recent Summit of Consciences for the Climate in Paris, France, on Tuesday.

"I come from a country that is 0.3 percent emitter of carbon in the world and yet we are one of the most vulnerable nations as you have seen and witnessed with Typhoon 'Haiyan' (Yolanda) in 2013. Being a vulnerable nation that is not the cause of this vulnerability, we hope that the Philippines will be the first to show the outcome of this summit," said Legarda in her speech for the summit's Fourth Plenary: Inspiring the World to Care-Igniting the Will to Act for the Climate.

The senator, who chairs the Senate committees on environment and natural resources, and climate change, pledged her commitment to launch a Summit of Consciences for the Climate in the Philippines "in all the cities and municipalities, barangays and state universities and colleges."

Legarda said this kind of gathering is an important tool in raising awareness about the urgency of taking climate action.

When asked the question, "Why do I care?" she said: "We realize that the experiences that led us to making the protection of the environment an advocacy and way of life are the events, issues and concerns that were either personal or that happened in our own communities. This only means that the key to addressing climate change lies in each and every individual's effort to be part of the solution."

The summit was an initiative of Nicolas Hulot, Special Envoy of the French President for the Protection of the Planet. It is a prelude to the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 21), which will also be hosted by the French government.

During the summit, the Call to Conscience for the Climate, which was signed by over 40 religious, cultural, environmental and political leaders present in the event, was officially launched.

French President François Hollande said: "The climate crisis and the wider ecological crisis cannot be reduced to these scientific, technological, economic and political, but it is a crisis of meaning. The root cause of environmental degradation and climate change is a way of life, a mode of production, a mode of consumption that is not compatible with human development."

Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stressed that "the earth is not ours; it is a treasure we hold in trust for our children. We must be worthy of that trust."

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