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Grace Meng

Congress of the United States

Sixth District, New York

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August 23, 2019

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

I write to vehemently urge that you make the issue of the burning of the Amazon forest a top priority at the upcoming G7 Summit. In addition, I urge you to subsequently convene a global summit, comprised of key governmental, non-governmental, and indigenous community partners, to devise solutions to curb the decimation of the Amazon.

As the largest remaining rainforest in the world, the Amazon is often called the "Lungs of our Planet," wherein it produces about 20% of the world's oxygen. Millions of species live there; in fact, 1 in 10 plants and animals of our planet call the Amazon home. It is also home to nearly one million indigenous people. While the Amazonian rainforest happens to be primarily located in Brazil, its continued protection and health undeniably impacts the future of our entire planet -- and of all humanity.

That is why the ongoing fires in the Amazon forest are an international crisis of epic proportions. The recent wildfires blazing in the Brazilian rainforest will exacerbate the global climate crisis. Brazil's own space research center (INPE) noted that the number of fires in Brazil is 80% higher than last year, with half of the nearly 75,000 fires in the country having occurred in the last month and most of them in the Amazon. INPE also said 99% of the fires result from human actions "either on purpose or by accident" -- making this man-made travesty all the more devastating.

While many have alleged that the fires are due to the deforestation policy changes made by the Bolsonaro Administration related to Brazilian laws governing the use of these precious lands, it is critical to constructively and cooperatively engage with President Bolsonaro and his Administration. Furthermore, inclusive engagement with indigenous people who reside in and are impacted by the Amazon, as well as regional governments and non-governmental partners, is essential to any agreement.

As such, in addition to addressing this issue at the upcoming G7 Summit, I urge you to engage with the Government of Brazil, neighboring nations of the Amazon forest, including indigenous people, and other key governmental, non-governmental, and private partners, to help protect "our planet's lungs." After all, this global emergency requires a global intervention.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


Grace Meng
Member of Congress