

# TAKE A STAND

## COP26 youth campaign

### Briefing document



### Top Lines:

1. As the UK hosts COP26 in Glasgow, I'm part of a campaign with young Christians aged 11-23 from all over the UK - from Falmouth to Aberdeen, Birmingham to Belfast - and inviting thousands of people to *Take A Stand* for climate justice.
2. Our campaign is built around an open letter to world leaders<sup>1</sup>, and supported by international development charity, Tearfund.
3. In our letter we make three requests for leaders to respond with actions and not just words:
  - End funding for fossil fuels around the world
  - Cut emissions down to zero as fast as possible
  - Provide funding and support for people living in poverty, as they adapt to climate changes we're too late to prevent

We are calling on leaders to go beyond just talking about the climate emergency, and to take the urgent actions needed to meet this crucial goal of 1.5°C.

### UK Government engagement with our requests

In this crucial year, the UK must be leaders on climate, making sure our actions match our promises and bringing the nations together behind targets that keep warming below 1.5°C.



#### Ending funding for fossil fuels around the world

The new UK Government policy to end direct public support of fossil fuels overseas, which came into force on 31st March, was great news. This is groundbreaking and makes the UK the first major economy to put an end to public finance for fossil fuels across the board. It continues the UK's leadership in this area, after having been the first major economy to commit to phasing out coal power as well.

At the same time, however, the UK Government also announced the 'North Sea transition deal' which could provide billions to support the oil and gas industry and keeps space open for new drilling - such as the Cambo oil field in the North Sea or the Cumbrian coal mine. This hugely weakens the UK's leadership at COP26, especially as the International Energy Agency has clearly stated there is no room for new fossil fuels if we are to reach net zero emissions by 2050.<sup>3</sup>

The world needs to come together to end support for all fossil fuels if we are to keep global heating within 1.5°C. We ask that the UK does all it can to get other countries and finance institutions to join the UK in ending overseas support for fossil fuels.



### **Cutting emissions down to zero as fast as possible**

We welcome the UK government's target to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels and for including the UK's share of international aviation and shipping emissions for the first time. We now need targets to be turned into reality and quickly; despite putting the fourth and fifth carbon budgets (for the period 2023-2032) into law, the UK is currently not on track to meet either of them.<sup>2</sup>

The ban on sales of new petrol and diesel cars in the UK from 2030 is a brilliant step, but we need this same level of commitment across all the UK's emissions, amongst other things: replacing gas-powered boilers, insulating homes, and increasing renewable energy production.

The new target for reducing emissions is promising, but actions must follow these words and a roadmap out of the climate crisis implemented.



### **Providing funding and support for people living in poverty, as they adapt to climate changes we're too late to prevent**

Before some of the group involved with this campaign were born, world leaders committed to funding \$100 billion per year for developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change and recover from disasters - but this promise has still not been met, and much of the funding so far has come as loans, adding to national debts<sup>4</sup>. We must see this promise fulfilled this year - as grants, and ensure at least 50% is protected for communities to adapt to the climate changes we're too late to prevent.

The Prime Minister's pledge to double the UK's climate finance over the coming five years to at least £11.6bn is a welcome one, and we ask that the UK maintains its commitment to provide 50% of its climate finance for adaptation and does all it can to make sure the \$100 billion commitment is reached by COP26, with 50% going to adaptation.

## **References**

<sup>1</sup>Take A Stand, *Open letter to world leaders from young people* (2021)

<https://wearetearfund.org/takeastand>

<sup>2</sup>Green Alliance, *Net zero policy tracker* (2021)

[https://green-alliance.org.uk/resources/Net\\_zero\\_policy\\_tracker\\_April\\_2021.pdf](https://green-alliance.org.uk/resources/Net_zero_policy_tracker_April_2021.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>International Energy Agency, *Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector* (2021)

<https://www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050>

<sup>4</sup>BBC, *COP 26: How much is the developing world getting to fight climate change?* (2021)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/57975275>