

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 leaders¹, 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:
 - o End funding for fossil fuels around the world
 - o Cut emissions down to zero as fast as possible
 - o 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 genuine 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 good news.

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 2050.³

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 want to see the UK do 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

The UK government has committed to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels and have included our share of international aviation and shipping emissions for the first time. But these are more words and aren't being followed with action. 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.²

The ban on sales of new petrol and diesel cars in the UK from 2030 is good news, 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.

We need huge investment to build back better from the pandemic and launch a green revolution, to create jobs, improve communities and tackle the climate emergency with fast action and not warm words.



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 debts⁴.

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.

References

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

<https://wearetearfund.org/takeastand>

²Green Alliance, *Net zero policy tracker* (2021)

https://green-alliance.org.uk/resources/Net_zero_policy_tracker_April_2021.pdf

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

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

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

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