



Wednesday 20 January 2021

Dear Group Chairs and Heads of Delegation,

We hope that the new year finds you, your families and your teams in good health. We know that many friends and colleagues have been personally affected by COVID-19 and we send our sympathy and best wishes.

As we start 2021 we look forward to working with you towards an ambitious and inclusive COP26 in November. This is a historic opportunity, especially in light of the impact of - and response to - the pandemic, and the need to intensify efforts around the world to implement the Paris Agreement.

Despite the many challenges of COVID-19, the international community must come together at COP26 to accelerate action to reduce emissions, strengthen adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change, scale up means of implementation, protect and restore nature, and empower inclusive action. These outcomes will be achieved through robust decisions on the long list of mandates for COP26, including the finalisation of the Paris Rulebook and other important issues that need to be addressed in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

Those outcomes should be underpinned by strong national commitments: the UK and Chile will continue to call for new ambitious nationally determined contributions, long term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies to reach net zero, adaptation communications and finance commitments.

While respecting concerns about the challenges associated with working virtually, we must make full use of the time we have to build understanding and find solutions. As we work towards COP26 we will take advantage of the familiar milestones of the climate calendar such as the Petersberg Dialogue, Bonn intersessional, UNGA, and Pre-COP. This will be supported by several strands of activity:

- strengthened ministerial, Group Chair and Head of Delegation engagement led by the incoming COP26 President, Alok Sharma, now full time in the role;
- monthly multilateral consultations with Group Chairs and Heads of Delegation that we will lead, covering some of the topics that will be central to COP26;
- consultations and technical work led by the Subsidiary Body Chairs; and
- continued advice, technical input and expertise by the Constituted Bodies.

We will communicate as the plan develops and dates of key milestones are finalised.

This will be complemented by progress on many related issues through the UK's five presidency campaigns and the work of the High Level Climate Action Champions Gonzalo Muñoz and Nigel Topping, UK International Environment Minister Lord Goldsmith, the UK's COP26 Champion for Adaptation & Resilience Anne-Marie Trevelyan and the Prime Minister's COP26 Finance Adviser Mark Carney. These campaigns and individuals are focussed on accelerating real world action consistent with what has already been agreed and respecting negotiation sensitivities. On the path to COP26, there are also important events that can help to shine a spotlight and advance work including a UK-led event on climate & development in March (more details to follow in due course), the UK's G7 Presidency and the Italian G20 Presidency, and more.

The Climate Ambition Summit, UN Climate Change Dialogues and the Race to Zero Dialogues at the end of last year showed how much commitment there is around the world to make progress at all levels despite the difficult circumstances. The acceleration of momentum is clear. We will build on that and the lessons learned to chart a course to COP26.

The monthly multilateral consultations starting on 28-29 January are stepping stones on that course: a chance for parties to move together towards COP26, identifying and testing solutions to key topics along the way. We commit to an inclusive and transparent approach. We will need to be flexible, not least in terms of the scheduling and timing which will be designed for inclusivity and respect to all parties around the world. We count on all parties to engage constructively in order to cover the ground necessary ahead of time to achieve our collective task in Glasgow.

As ever, we are working in very close partnership with Subsidiary Body Chairs Marianne Karlsen and Tosi Mpanu Mpanu, as well as the UNFCCC Secretariat. In these uncertain times, let us reassure you that the Presiding Officers are united in our common purpose and mutually supportive plans.

We really look forward to seeing you again in person as soon as the situation allows. Until that time, there is a lot of work to do. All of you have a crucial role to play in making COP26 a success, and in strengthening our collective response to climate change.

Yours sincerely,

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