

COP26 HIGH LEVEL STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF UNFCCC INFORMAL GROUP ON PARLIAMENTARIANS

Delivered by: Malini Mehra, CEO, GLOBE International secretariat.

Parliamentarians have been observing and engaging in COP26 proceedings these past 10 days. Those not on government delegations, or present in person, have been observing from parliaments and constituencies around the world.

In countries such as the UK, parliamentary select committees have come together in advance of COP26 to scrutinise the process directly with the COP President, Alok Sharma, and his team – bringing transparency and accountability into the process. This will continue after COP26.

At COP26 itself – both here in the Blue Zone and outside - there have been numerous parliamentary events with legislators from across the political spectrum. This week saw the launch of the Centre-Right Climate Action Declaration uniting conservative parliamentarians around a positive pro-climate action agenda. The Climate Vulnerable Forum parliamentarians representing countries most vulnerable to climate impacts have called for a Climate Emergency Pact to rebuild confidence in international climate cooperation. Their call seeks to accelerate adaption and keep 1.5 C within reach, through delivery plans for climate finance, annual ambition reviews, operationalising the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage, ensuring carbon markets are 1.5 C compatible, and related measures.

This week has seen a barrage of pledges and pacts being made to address the climate and nature emergencies. These are welcome. But they will remain paper tigers unless parliaments enact laws to bring them into the purview of national

legislation. Since Kyoto in 1997, national climate laws have grown from more than 50 to more than 2500 globally. Glasgow will see another surge of law-making to ensure that net zero and other pledges are anchored in domestic legislation with clear targets, timetables, and resources. Without laws there is no credibility.

Moving from Ambition to Delivery will require clear implementation pathways, and in every country these are through sub-national bodies, including states, territories, provinces and local governments. For this reason, effective climate governance must be multilevel and involve multistakeholder collaboration.

As elected representatives, parliamentarians act on behalf of all major groups and constituencies gathered here. Legislators must represent the interest of all frontline communities, including indigenous peoples, women, and youth, to ensure constitutional rights are upheld and rhetoric is translated into reality.

Parliaments are the most legitimate democratic fora for monitoring, reporting and verification of pledges made here in Glasgow. Importantly, as Al Gore said in his address to the GLOBE COP26 Legislators Summit last week, politics is a renewable resource and ambition can be strengthened. In these remaining hours, governments must now rise to the challenge of public expectation to act transformatively. Parties can be assured that parliaments will hold them to account upon their return.

NB.: GLOBE International serves as Focal Point for the UNFCCC Informal Group on Parliamentarians which includes Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, ParlAmericas, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Climate Parliament and ICLEI. <https://www.globelegislators.org/globe-activities-cop26/unfccc-focal-point-parliamentary-group>