

COP26 President: “We must ensure that we leave no issue and no one behind”

Friends,

It is fantastic to speak to you from Hanoi as you meet in session for the first time since COP25 in Madrid, almost 18 months ago.

It is vital that we make this session count.

Over the past months I have met and spoken with many world leaders, ministers, civil society organisations, chief executives of businesses, and youth representatives.

And their message is clear – the world is watching us. It is watching our processes.

We must step up our global response to the climate crisis.

Demonstrating the same urgency as we are showing in fighting the coronavirus pandemic.

This session represents a vital opportunity to make tangible progress within the UNFCCC process.

It really cannot be about dusting off position papers from COP25 and resuming where we left off. We must take this opportunity to move beyond positional statements.

And instead, we must work together, we must consolidate options and draft text that we can bring to COP26 for finalisation and adoption.

We must put in these really hard miles of work now so we arrive in Glasgow having done our homework, ready to reach agreement that keeps 1.5 degrees within reach.

Agreement that protects people and nature from the impacts of climate change. Agreement that mobilises finance, and agreement that encourages cooperation across borders and across society to deliver against the goals of the Paris Agreement.

And we must ensure that we leave no issue and no one behind.

I have utmost faith in all of you making full use of the coming weeks.

And in the expert leadership of SB Chairs Marianne Karlsen and Tosi Mpanu Mpanu, with whom the UK and Chile continue to work extremely closely.

And I would like to thank the SB Chairs, as well as my dear friend the Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa, and her whole Secretariat team, for

their efforts in organising this session.

Particularly, their great work in addressing the very valid concerns raised on virtual working.

And I would like to wish all of you the very best for this vital session.

I look forward to reading the outputs of your collective efforts.

Thank you.