

Looking ahead to the Climate Ambition Summit 2020

Deputy Secretary-General,

Excellencies,

It is a real honour to be speaking to you all again at the UN.

As the Deputy Secretary General has just set out, climate action cannot wait.

Even though COP26 has been postponed, we need to act now to fulfil our Paris Agreement commitments.

When I was last here in March, I heard many of you talk about the challenges your countries face and the steps you are taking.

Since then I have met with Ministers from many of your countries. On Zoom, at virtual events, and recently in person once again.

In fact, I am speaking to you today from South Korea.

Over this time, I have been listening carefully to both Parties and non-state actors.

I have been impressed by the commitment to climate action that I have heard.

It is clear that the appetite to tackle this challenge remains, but we all must do more.

Together, I know we can ensure the Paris Agreement delivers.

That is why I am here to tell you more about the Climate Ambition Summit 2020; co-hosted by the UK COP26 Presidency, the UN and France, in partnership with Chile and Italy.

Summit Details

This Summit will be an important milestone on the road to COP26. It will be a chance for leaders to demonstrate their commitment to the Paris Agreement and to come together in support of the multilateral process.

This Summit will provide a platform for leaders ready to come forward with announcements under the three pillars of the Paris Agreement; mitigation, adaptation and support.

Specifically, we are calling for:

- New, more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs);
- Long-Term Strategies setting out a pathway to net zero emissions;
- Climate finance commitments to support the most vulnerable;

- And crucially, ambitious adaptation plans and underlying policies.

We must all maintain our focus on increasing ambition, and there will be no space for general statements.

Announcements must show genuine progress from existing policies and Paris targets.

We will give priority to the most transformational commitments put forward.

Regardless of whether it is a major economy or smaller climate vulnerable country.

As COP President Designate, I am committed to a 'whole of society' approach, and we will also use the Summit to create an inclusive and diverse platform.

Featuring a range of vital non-government voices to hold us all accountable.

This will be a virtual summit, held on Saturday the 12th of December starting at 9AM New York time.

We will be seeking pre-recorded statements, and I ask Parties to provide initial expressions of interest in a speaking slot – along with an indication of their ambition – by the 6th of November.

We will issue a full logistical note shortly, including all details of the event and how to formally request a speaking slot.

Closing

While I recognise that time is short and that the world is facing an immense challenge with COVID-19, we urgently need to raise our ambition.

The Paris goals require us to halve global emissions over the next decade, and to rapidly adapt to our warming climate.

Current NDCs put us on track for 3 degrees warming.

This is simply unacceptable, we must close the gap.

Yet, I remain optimistic; countries such as Jamaica, the Marshall Islands, Norway, Moldova, and our partners Chile have shown leadership by announcing new, more ambitious NDCs.

I am asking today, that you join them by coming forward with enhanced ambition in December.

I also welcome the recent announcements made by President Xi at UNGA and Prime Minister Suga yesterday, and we look forward to working with both countries on their climate ambition.

It is clear that recovery from COVID-19 and climate ambition are not mutually exclusive.

Member states can build back better by embedding their climate commitments into COVID-19 recovery packages, taking advantage of the plummeting cost of renewables, and the opportunities for our societies that green and resilient growth brings.

This will be a chance for us all to turn words into action, and we hope you will all join us for this important summit.

Only by coming together can we build the zero carbon, climate resilient future that is essential for our people and our planet.

Thank you.