

Prime Minister's address to Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate: 17 September 2021

Prime Minister Boris Johnson addressed the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate this afternoon, convened by the President of the United States Joe Biden.

Ahead of the UN General Assembly next week and with weeks to go until the major climate summit COP26 in Glasgow, the Prime Minister called on world leaders, particularly the G20, to come with ambitious commitments that will set the planet on the right path to net zero and keep within reach the aim of limiting warming of the planet to 1.5 degrees Celsius. This includes commitments like ending coal power, shifting to electric vehicles, halting deforestation and providing the climate finance for developing nations, which will require greater ambition and international collaboration to accelerate the innovation and deployment key clean technologies so they are accessible and affordable for all.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister also set out that the UK will be among the first signatories of the Global Methane Pledge, a US-EU initiative to reduce global methane emissions by 30% by 2030 compared to levels during the 2020s. The is due to officially launch at COP26 in Glasgow.

The UK has a strong record on reducing emissions from methane, one of the main greenhouses gases warming our planet, with around 60% of methane emissions cut over the last three decades across the waste, energy and agriculture industries.

This comes as new OECD data out today shows that developed countries are \$20 billion short of meeting their commitment to mobilise \$100 billion in international climate finance for developing nations, and a new report from the UNFCCC published today makes clear that all countries must come forward with new, ambitious 2030 targets – Nationally Determined Contributions – if the world is to stop emissions from rising.

Thank you very much John, Secretary Kerry, and Secretary General Guterres, and thank you President Biden for your leadership and convening us all today with a little more than 1,000 hours to go, my friends, until I welcome you all to Glasgow to the COP26 summit.

And as we just heard from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina this is the most important period I think now in the history of the planet.

Because COP simply must succeed.

And that is only going to happen if, as we've heard from António, if people come to Glasgow armed with the commitments that will enable us to keep that

increase of 1.5c within reach and take us to net zero sooner rather than later, and hopefully by the middle of the century. And we also need the cash that will allow the developing world to do the same.

So President Biden makes a very good point when he talks about the action that we need to take on methane

and I'm very pleased to say the UK will be among the very first to sign the Methane Pledge.

Because it is a microcosm of the challenges we face.

The International Energy Agency reckons the world already possesses the know-how and technology to avoid as much as three quarters of the current emissions of methane, that's CH₄, produced by the oil and gas industry.

Over the last 30 years the UK has cut emissions of methane by something like 60 per cent.

And there are good commercial uses for methane, you can use it to make fabrics, you can use it to make anti-freeze.

So the world could slash its output of this powerful greenhouse gas tomorrow if we wanted to.

But the trouble is that the G20 currently lacks both the ambition needed to do so, and the offer of finance to developing nations that's needed to follow suit.

That, in a nutshell, is what we face with the whole climate conundrum.

We know what's going to happen if we fail to reach net zero. You heard Joe describe the consequences we're already seeing on our planet today.

We know how to fix it, we know how to get there, and we're continuously generating ever-more innovative ways of doing that.

From the biggest carbon capture facility opening this week in Iceland, to the Californian scientists feeding seaweed to cows so they belch less methane – that's the cows obviously, not the scientists.

And now what we need is the ambition and dedication required to bring it all together.

So over the next 1,000 hours between now and everyone coming to COP26, we must do the work that will allow us to come to Glasgow bearing the ambitious NDCs – Nationally Determined Contributions – and rock-solid commitments on coal, cars and trees.

And, as Joe has just said, we must get serious about filling the \$100 billion pot that the developing world needs in order to do its bit.

Because as Sheikh Hasina has pointed out, the developing nations are on the

front line of climate change, they don't lack the will, they don't lack the technologies, to make a difference, they simply lack the resources.

We in the G20 are blessed with both.

So let's show the leadership the world needs, let's do our duty by others who are less fortunate than ourselves, and let's use these 1,000 hours to set a course that will protect our planet, protect humanity, for a thousand years to come.