

Speech: Speech to the Conference of Parties (COP) 23

Bula vinaka! [boo-lah vee-nah-kah, meaning 'warm hello'].

It is such an honour to represent the United Kingdom at COP 23, and I want to thank the Fijian Presidency for its excellent leadership...

... and the people of Germany for their great hospitality.

As our Prime Minister highlighted in New York in September, the Paris Agreement is a brilliant example of effective global cooperation. Every country in the world has now signed the Agreement, and I am proud that the UK is part of this.

It has never been more important to accelerate our momentum. Recent extreme weather events have devastated the lives of many across the world. I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to all those affected and emphasise that we are taking our commitments under the Paris Agreement very seriously and we are taking action.

1. Firstly, for the UK we launched a Clean Growth Strategy for the UK just last month – a critical set of measures to meet our domestic carbon budgets and help our global CO2 reduction process.
2. I was also proud that the UK recently announced plans to phase out unabated coal fired electricity generation by 2025... our intent to end the sale of conventional petrol and diesel cars by 2040... and to establish our Green Finance Taskforce
3. Earlier today the UK, Canada, and over twenty five other parties committed to forming the Powering Past Coal Alliance – a new alliance committed to phasing out unabated coal from power generation.
4. We have also kept our promises in supporting poorer nations to accelerate the transition to a more resilient and low carbon future and play our role in meeting our collective goal of mobilising \$100bn in climate finance per year by 2020.

Last year, we showed international leadership by successfully balancing our climate finance across mitigation and adaptation... and so far we have mobilised £2.2 billion public and £500 million private finance for climate change purposes in developing countries. This has helped over 34 million people deal with the impacts of climate change.

... and I am very proud of the over three hundred million pounds of UK funding announcements at this COP on protecting forests, encouraging private sector investment in sustainable infrastructure, and helping countries finance their existing emissions reduction plans.

Plus we have recently committed to double our 2017 funding to IPCC and make multi-year pledges to be sure that this important institution can continue to play a crucial role in providing independent, rigorous and balanced scientific information on climate change.

The UK also continues to be a global leader in protecting oceans and marine life:

- We are on track to protect 4 million square kilometres of ocean across Overseas Territories by 2020.
- During this COP, we have also announced that the United Kingdom has signed up to the “Because the Oceans” declaration and I encourage others who have not done so, to do the same.

We see pre-2020 action as extremely important – on Tuesday we ratified the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol on phasing down HFCs...

...and I am pleased to say that our Foreign Secretary signed the Doha Amendment yesterday.

We are not resting on our laurels. In the New Year we are looking forward to hosting the Commonwealth summit in London which will help to provide a springboard for future collective action...

We see it as crucial that over the next few years we achieve:

... Agreement on the rules that underpin the Paris Agreement...

... an increase in ambition as technology and innovation makes the transition a win win for the planet and our economy.

... but of course the action that really matters is in the real world where businesses and organisations are taking the signals from these negotiations to transform our future

There is much we can – and must – achieve together.

Thank you to all parties here for working together to make COP23 a huge success.