

Scaling up climate action: country strategies and emerging investment opportunities for a green recovery

Good morning, afternoon and evening to everybody, I'd like to thank the Climate Policy Initiative for organising this event.

It is a pleasure for me to be speaking alongside Germany's Minister of the Environment, Svenja Schulze, and the UN Under-Secretary-General Inger Andersen.

My colleague the COP President Designate Alok Sharma expresses his apologies and with regret, I'm afraid to announce that unforeseen circumstances have resulted in him not being able to attend this event.

The fact that I am speaking from my own department here in London is a reminder of the unprecedented times we are living in.

2020 has seen countries across the globe take extraordinary measures to shut down large swathes of their economies in order to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

Here in the UK, we did this on the 23rd of March whilst also launching a series of major policy initiatives to protect businesses, workers and consumers through the public health emergency.

Now, as we approach the next step in the phased reopening of our economy, and as we look to recover and rebuild, we are faced with a huge opportunity.

According to the IMF, governments across the world have already provided about 10 trillion dollars for the recovery, and we are only at the start of this process.

On Tuesday this week, the UK Prime Minister unveiled an ambitious economic strategy to usher our nation into the next stage of recovery.

A 'New Deal' to help build the UK economy back to health.

As the Prime Minister said, this moment gives us a much greater chance to be radical and to do things differently.

To build back better.

Of course, this is not just an opportunity for the UK, but for every country.

We all have an opportunity to create a fairer, a greener and a more resilient global economy.

And those of you attending this event today will know that we can only

achieve this in partnership with business and finance.

In the last decade, globally we saw the cost of wind power fall by 49%, and that of solar power by 85%.

Renewables are already cheaper than coal power in two-thirds of all countries in the world.

This progress was only made possible through countries, companies and financial institutions coming together in partnership.

They've deployed investment. They've spurred innovation. They've scaled up technologies. And all ultimately working together, we have driven down costs.

But with temperatures still forecast to rise by around three degrees by the end of the century, we know that we must go further and faster to tackle climate change.

So as we look forward to COP26 next November, our aim is to increase ambitions towards a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy.

We want all nations to submit more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions, committing to further cuts in carbon emissions by 2030 and to reaching net zero as soon as possible.

As the UK's Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth, I have seen many excellent examples of countries working together to drive up ambition.

Minister Schulze will know of the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action Facility, or NAMA, which is a great example of UK-Germany cooperation and leadership in this area.

Through the NAMA Facility we have invested nearly half a billion Euros in clean energy, electric buses and sustainable farming projects across Africa, Asia and South America.

And I'm pleased to say that, alongside our German friends, we will soon expand this successful programme to launch a special funding window for projects focused on raising NDC ambition in the aftermath of Covid-19.

With this commitment, we will support countries to implement ambitious NDCs and take hold of this unique opportunity to rebuild sustainable and resilient economies.

At this moment, let me pause to mention those countries that have already come forward with improved NDCs. They include the Marshall Islands, Chile, Norway, Rwanda, and yesterday's newest member for this esteemed group, Jamaica.

Welcome to you all. Thank you for the leadership you have already shown.

The UK will come forward with our own more ambitious NDC as soon as possible.

And I look forward to our friends and comrades around the world showing just as much ambition when they submit their new NDCs and Long-Term Strategies.

Ahead of COP26 we have outlined five areas which need particular attention: clean energy, clean transport, nature-based solutions, adaptation and resilience, and tying everything together, finance.

I list finance last because it really is the key to unlocking all further progress.

The OECD estimates that we will need nearly 7 trillion dollars a year up to 2030 to meet the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Last year at the UN, our Prime Minister announced a doubling of the UK's international climate finance commitment to 11.6 billion pounds over 2021 to 2025.

This, in turn, will mobilise further finance from public and private sources.

Helping us meet, and indeed move beyond the 100-billion-dollar goal.

Many of the Multilateral Development Banks represented here today are also looking to align their portfolios with the Paris goals, and I hope we can all work together on this important journey.

As the UK takes up the COP Presidency, we are calling on our international development partners to show similar ambition in their future climate finance, looking ahead to the Finance in Common Summit our French colleagues are hosting in November.

Today I can announce that the UK's own Development Finance Institution, the CDC, has published an ambitious Climate Strategy.

This strategy sets out a comprehensive approach to align all of the CDC's activities with the Paris Agreement, based on the core principles of reaching net zero by 2050, enabling a just transition whilst strengthening adaptation and resilience.

But of course, public finance alone will not reach the scale needed to drive the transition.

To move from billions to trillions, we will need all finance to align with the Paris Agreement.

In February, my colleague the COP President Designate joined Mark Carney to launch the COP26 Private Finance Action Plan to help private finance support the global economy transition to net zero.

The BlackRock report has stated global sustainable funds have attracted more than 30 billion pounds in the first three months of 2020 – that is an increase of more than 40 percent year-on-year.

This is just one example of the huge momentum that is gathering behind this

transition.

And in the lead up to COP26, we want to build on that momentum.

We want all financial institutions to commit to net zero targets, with clear transition plans detailing exactly how they mean to get there.

And today, banks, insurers, pension funds and investors with balance sheets of 139 trillion dollars combined are demanding that the sector engages with the Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures.

We have seen over four fifths of the top 1100 global companies now disclosing climate-related financial risks in line with some of the TCFD recommendations.

To take this further, I am asking all financial institutions listening today to commit to reporting a full set of TCFD disclosures in their next reporting round, and to demand TCFD-consistent disclosures from their borrowers and portfolio companies.

This I believe, will send a hugely powerful signal that the private sector is ready and willing to support the climate transition, including in developing countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, we all have a part to play in our planet's future.

So I really hope and trust we can use this event to drive the conversation forward and together endeavour to build a fairer, greener economy.

Thank you all very much.

[New online tool to involve young people in policy making](#)

Young people from across the country will be invited to share their views on key issues with the government using a new digital platform launched today (2 July).

The [‘Involved’ Instagram page](#) will be a major step in engaging young people aged 13-25 around decisions made at the heart of government, by asking questions through the app's polling and stories functions.

Responses will then feed directly into live public consultations and wider policy making across government departments.

The tool, supported by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and managed by the British Youth Council, has been designed by a group of 30

young people aged between 15 and 24 set up last year to offer a youth perspective on decisions made in government.

The Youth Steering Group has already provided valuable advice to Ministers on issues including youth violence, volunteering, youth services and the coronavirus outbreak. In the coming weeks young people will be invited to respond to a range of questions on the 'Involved' page regarding the impact coronavirus has had on their lives.

For example, young people will be asked how they feel about social distancing measures, what support they would like in accessing information about coronavirus and what extra help they feel they need during this time.

Harley Taylor, of the Youth Steering Group, said:

Young people are passionate about seeing social change in their communities and must be able to participate in the decision making of government. Involved will serve as an important opportunity to gauge young people's views on the hot topics within government.

Minister for Civil Society, Baroness Barran said:

Young people often feel like it is hard to get their voices heard. Involved will give them an easy way to contribute their views on issues that matter to them, helping our decisions as Ministers to reflect these better.

This commitment to involve young people's views in policy making is part of our ambitious, long-term plan to support them to thrive as we rebuild and recover from the coronavirus outbreak.

The tool follows the Chancellor's announcement last year of a £500 million Youth Investment Fund for the five years from April 2020, to give young people somewhere to go, something positive to do and someone to speak to.

The British Youth Council have worked with [The Mix](#), [Youth Focus North West](#), [Youth Focus: North East](#) and [Youth Work Unit](#) in Yorkshire and Humber to deliver the project.

The Youth Steering Group is currently recruiting for new members. Young people aged 16-25 are encouraged to apply in writing, by video message or voice note and contact membership@byc.org.uk. Applications close on 12th July 2020.

Notes to Editors

- The questions on the platform are aimed at young people aged 13-25.

Consultation launched on post-EU reforms for British courts

Press release

A 6 week consultation launched today (2 July 2020) seeks to deliver on the public's wish – expressed in the 2016 referendum – for British courts to be the ultimate arbiters of our law.



- consultation opens to seek views from legal sector, businesses and judiciary
- ministers act so that EU case law can be reconsidered more rapidly by our courts
- government delivers on commitment for UK courts have the final say on legal disputes

Views are being sought from the legal sector, business, and the judiciary on which British courts should have the power to depart from retained EU case law. At present, only the UK Supreme Court and the High Court of Justiciary in Scotland will have this power from 31 December 2020.

Under proposals set out by the Lord Chancellor Robert Buckland, more courts would be given the power to move away from those EU case laws which we retain – such as those concerning our fisheries, borders or taxes. This will enable the law to evolve more flexibly to recognise the UK's changing status following on from our departure from the EU, as we take back control of our laws.

Following the Transition Period, British judges will be able to reconsider these types of cases in the new context of the UK's departure from the EU.

Lord Chancellor said:

Since leaving the EU we are no longer bound by European laws, and

it is absolutely right that British courts have the final say on legal disputes.

We will work with judges and the legal sector to decide exactly which courts should have the power to depart from retained EU case law and will set out our plan in due course.

The [consultation](#) sets out 2 options to expand the number of UK courts and tribunals that can depart from retained EU law, whilst maintaining legal certainty across the country. The Ministry of Justice will consider extending the powers to either:

- The Court of Appeal of England and Wales, the Inner Court of Session in Scotland, the Court of Appeal Northern Ireland and equivalent level courts throughout the UK;
- or, those courts and the High Court of England and Wales, the Outer House of the Court of Session in Scotland, The Sheriff Appeal Court in Scotland, the High Court of Justiciary, and the High Court in Northern Ireland.

The government will continue to work with the devolved assemblies, legal professionals, judges, and business to make sure our legal sector's world-leading status is maintained and our courts are equipped with the powers they need.

All responses to the consultation will be carefully considered, with next steps set out in due course. Any change to regulations would require legislation.

Published 2 July 2020

[OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media: UK statement](#)

The United Kingdom welcomes the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Mr Harlem Desir, back to the Permanent Council and we thank you for your continued work to promote and defend media freedom since your last report.

Let us first put on record our support for you and your team's dedicated work to hold all OSCE participating States to account, and in doing so to support us as we implement our commitments on media freedom.

The content of your report demonstrates the need for greater attention to media freedom, and reminds us of the foresight of our predecessors, when they created the Representative on Freedom of the Media over twenty years ago.

Despite the achievement of securing the Milan Decision on Safety of Journalists in 2018, it is clear that all states must remain vigilant regarding threats to journalists and media actors across the OSCE region. We remain concerned over the number of attacks, threats and harassment of journalists in a wide number of States, as well as the use of legal threats to intimidate or silence journalists.

We also remain concerned over the specific and distinct threat that women journalists face when their work and their gender intersects. We therefore appreciate the efforts of your office, over a number of years, to understand and respond to the gender-related aspects of safety of journalists. We look forward to the forthcoming publication of the Resource Guide on Safety of Female Journalists Online.

More recently, we appreciate the vigilance of your office during these unprecedented times, and welcome the joint statement on COVID-19 issued together with the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, and the Organisation of American States Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, calling on states to promote and protect access to, and the free flow of, information during the pandemic.

In this context, we are concerned by the increase in measures to criminalise content, including by the use of defamation laws, or the introduction of new legislation. As your March joint statement said "Any attempts to criminalise information relating to the pandemic may create distrust in institutional information, delay access to reliable information and have a chilling effect on freedom of expression." In this context, we also call on States to support public service broadcasting and to ensure that journalists have access to information.

As we said in March, a free press is crucial for a comprehensive response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Their work serves to keep societies informed, to promote proper health measures and to counter false or misleading information. It allows people to access credible information to protect their health and that of their communities. It allows people to recognise problems that must be addressed and to hold their governments to account.

Mr Chairman, one year ago, the United Kingdom, together with Canada, launched the Media Freedom Coalition. To date, 36 countries are members of the coalition of which 25 are OSCE participating States. The first full meeting of Senior Officials of all Coalition members met in Geneva in January, and we are grateful that a member of your team was able to participate in this meeting.

Since its launch the Media Freedom Coalition have reaffirmed members' commitment to media freedom through our statement on World Press Freedom Day and highlighted the continued importance of Media Freedom during the coronavirus pandemic. We look forward to upcoming events such as the postponed World Press Freedom Day conference in December, and more immediately, your event on artificial intelligence and free speech this month. Such events provide an opportunity for Coalition members to work with your team to take this important work forward to protect and promote media

freedom.

The RFOM is a critical institution. And it is important that the RFOM is able to carry out their mandate in an impartial, independent and objective manner. Just as you have done Mr. Desir.

Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Ireland: September 2020

Press release

Mr Paul Johnston has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Ireland in succession to Mr Robin Barnett CMG who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service.



Mr Paul Johnston has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Ireland in succession to Mr Robin Barnett CMG who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service. Mr Johnston will take up his appointment during September 2020.

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Full name: Paul Charles Johnston

Married to: Nicola Carol Johnston

2017 to 2020	Brussels, UK Ambassador to the EU for Political and Security Affairs, UK Permanent Representation to the EU
2015 to 2017	Brussels, Deputy Permanent Representative, UK Permanent Representation to NATO
2011 to 2015	Stockholm, Her Majesty's Ambassador and Director Nordic-Baltic Network
2008 to 2010	FCO, Director, International Security

2005 to 2008	New York, Political Counsellor, UK Mission to the United Nations
2002 to 2004	FCO, Head, Security Policy Department
1999 to 2002	FCO, Various roles including Head of Kosovo Policy Team; Head of European Defence Section; and Deputy Head of Department for EU External Policy
1995 to 1999	Paris, Private Secretary to Her Majesty's Ambassador and subsequently Second Secretary covering, inter alia, the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia
1993 to 1995	FCO, Desk Officer for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eastern Adriatic Department
1990 to 1993	Ministry of Defence, roles including on International Procurement Policy, Resources and Programmes (Navy) and as Private Secretary to the 2nd Permanent Under Secretary

Further information

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