

Young people leading the charge on climate action

It is a pleasure to join you today.

And to participate in the opening of Mock COP.

I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to deliver this event.

And I applaud your dedication and commitment to tackling climate change.

Across the world, young people are leading the charge on climate action.

We see this, in projects like the Resilient40.

Which is amplifying the voices of over 60 youth leaders, from 29 African countries in vital climate change discussions.

Or indeed the Resolution Project, which supports student entrepreneurs with over 300 social ventures in more than 80 countries.

From recycling solutions in Ethiopia.

To water management in Brazil.

And household biogas generation in Nepal.

Young people are on the frontline of global climate action.

And this is absolutely vital.

For the future of our planet.

And for the success of COP26 next November.

The gravity and urgency of the situation we face demands that COP26 marks the moment

when the world unites together behind a fair, resilient and zero emissions future.

And that means governments committing to ambitious emission reduction targets, and adaptation plans.

It means donor countries living up to their obligations.

And fulfilling the commitments that they have made to the global South to put \$100 billion a year into international climate finance.

And it means listening to diverse voices in the negotiations.

So that we are ensuring the interests of young people, as well as Civil Society as a whole, are heard loud and clear.

From both the global South and North.

To achieve this, I have been clear that we want civil society groups to be at the heart of both our preparations for COP, and the summit itself.

That is why I met with young people and civil society organisations on a visit to the UN in New York earlier in the year.

And I commit to meeting groups which comprise young people and civil society in every country that I visit going forward.

It is also why we have established the COP26 Civil Society and Youth advisory council.

Where young activists, NGOs, indigenous peoples and faith groups are very much part of our conversations in planning COP26.

We are also supporting our COP partners, Italy.

Both in their preparations for the Pre-COP and of course the Youth Event next September.

And in the launch of their Youth4Climate series.

Helping to support and amplify the work of young climate activists.

Because such activism plays a really vital role.

Although the commitments required in the Paris Agreement need to be made by national governments, success will belong to each and every one of us.

Reaching net zero will only be achieved through a joint effort.

And for this civil society is absolutely vital.

You are vital in pushing all of us to go further: governments and regions; businesses and cities; schools and universities.

By raising awareness, generating support, and asking us to do more.

That is one of the great benefits of this Mock COP.

It will show governments and organisations around the world the appetite that exists for ambitious climate action from young people.

So I will finish with this ask: keep up that momentum.

Keep showing us what is possible.

And keep advocating for climate action in your home countries.

Because if you do, the job of negotiators, who are urging countries around the world to make more ambitious commitments, becomes much easier.

As does the work of the Race to Zero campaign.

Which is encouraging non-state actors, such as businesses, cities, regions and universities around the world to commit to net zero as soon as possible.

And if we work together in this way, I believe COP26 will mark the moment when the potential of the Paris Agreement is fulfilled.

Thank you.