

High Ambition Coalition Leaders' Statement – UN General Assembly 2023

This year has seen unprecedented heat - on land and in the ocean. Temperature records have broken all over the world, accompanied by floods, wildfires, cyclones, and droughts. This is happening at just 1.1 degrees of global warming. There can be no more pretence that anything other than staying within 1.5 degrees is an acceptable limit to pursue. The risks to the ability of those on the front lines to survive and thrive are too great.

The Synthesis Report of the Global Stocktake must spur us towards faster, stronger action to respond to this crisis.

Until we stop adding carbon to the atmosphere, the harm we are causing, particularly to the poorest and those least responsible for the climate crisis, will deepen, and the need to continuously adapt will never end. The costs will go up and up. We will count them in human lives.

Staying within 1.5 requires us to halve global emissions this decade on the way to net zero. We know the first step is to peak greenhouse gas emissions before 2025, and unless we do this, we have no chance of halving emissions by 2030.

Systemic transformations are needed across all economic sectors, driven by a global phase out of fossil fuels. Abatement technologies have a role to play in reducing emissions, but that role in the decarbonization of energy systems is minimal. We cannot use it to green-light fossil fuel expansion. Restoring and protecting carbon sinks should be a top priority. We must set and meet ambitious global targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency, as part of a just and equitable transition that delivers global clean energy access.

Creating a world that is resilient in the face of the climate crisis will require drastic adaptation efforts worldwide. Loss and damage caused by the climate crisis is accumulating every day, and it will continue to worsen at a faster pace as tipping points are reached.

This is the time for solidarity. The mobilization of finance for climate action must reach the trillions, and we must put in place financial system reforms to be responsive to the multitude of crises the world faces today. All financial flows need to contribute to a more just and equitable world, helping countries develop in a way that is aligned to 1.5 and builds resilience to the impacts of the climate crisis, because no country should have to choose between fighting poverty and fighting for our planet.

The Global Stocktake must be a turning point. We must emerge from COP with the world committed to an ambitious and robust plan to close the ambition and implementation gaps across the spectrum of climate action in this critical decade and beyond.

Science tells us what's needed. We must draw on the wisdom of the IPCC and other scientists to develop an action plan to deliver the necessary course correction across all aspects of the Paris Agreement.

We know that human rights are threatened by the climate crisis. We must work together to uphold them, and advance urgent and equitable responses to the climate crisis. We will give under-represented voices, including women, indigenous peoples, children and youth, a prominent platform in this process.

And we recognise that non-state actors, including civil society and the private sector, are key to accelerating climate action too.

We are resolved to do this, and we invite other leaders to join us in this resolve.

Signatories: Mr. Alexander van der Bellen, Federal President of Austria ; Mr. Alexander De Croo, Prime Minister of Belgium ; Mr. Gabriel Boric Font, President of Chile ; Mr. Gustavo Francisco Petro Urrego, President of Colombia ; Ms. Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark ; Mr. Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia ; Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of Finland ; Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of France ; Ms. Katrín Jakobsdóttir, Prime Minister of Iceland ; Mr. Leo Varadkar, Taoiseach of Ireland ; Mr. William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya ; Mr. David Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands ; Mr. Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands ; Mr. Surangel Whipps Jr., President of Palau ; Mr. Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain ; Mr. Kausea Natano, Prime Minister of Tuvalu ; Mr. Meltek Sato Kilman Livtunvanu, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu.