

# Climate Crisis: workers united for urgent action

In November 2021, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties COP26 will be held in Glasgow. These are the most important climate talks since the 2015 Paris agreement, with the prospect of raising national and international ambitions to tackle the climate crisis and agreeing measures to limit the average global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

The climate crisis is not just an environmental problem, it is a problem of justice – social and economic, as well as environmental justice, nationally and internationally. It is about fairness and equity as much as it is about avoidance of damaging climate change.

What is needed is radical, urgent,

and far-reaching action to cut dangerous greenhouse gas emissions; but so far emissions have continued to rise whilst measures to tackle the crisis have remained little more than empty rhetoric.

As such the need to campaign for real measures to address climate change is as much an issue for trade unions and workers as it is for environmentalists. We must make sure that measures to tackle climate change are in the interests of workers, not against them; and we must not allow the climate change agenda to be dictated by employers, business, and politicians who want to place responsibility for change on individuals while evading the significant changes

that they can and must make.

Politicians and corporations talk of a ‘Just Transition’ without addressing the issues of fairness bound-up in addressing the climate crisis. We believe that workers and their representatives need to be at the forefront of tackling the crisis. Promises of a Just Transition will not be delivered unless we demand it, and for a genuinely Just Transition we need wider economic and social transformations that address the inherent inequalities of neo-liberal economic and social systems – inequalities most recently laid bare by the Coronavirus pandemic. Yet, in some sectors, such as public transport, the Government is responding to



Climate Camp



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the pandemic by actively pursuing a cuts agenda that will only serve to exacerbate the climate crisis.

TUCG member unions are calling on our movement and others to work together to understand the requirements and impacts of decarbonisation across our whole society and economy, in all sectors – energy, transport, construction, food and agriculture, and public services including frontline emergency services. This must include repurposing the education system around the climate and ecological emergency; ensuring the training sector is able to meet the challenges ahead; a social security system to protect workers and their communities through change, and a progressive tax system to underpin the transition.

We call on trade unionists and allies to support these aims and four key principles that we believe are essential to underpinning our demands as part of a genuinely Just Transition to a sustainable economy and society:

**1 Green jobs must be skilled, well-paid, safe and secure jobs not “greenwash” – this will require investment and training to support yet to be developed sectors and technologies. Workers should be guaranteed retraining and a new, unionised job on equivalent terms and conditions.**

**2 Public ownership and investment must play a central role in sectors such as energy and transport, as well as in supporting the transition across other sectors to progress adaptation to climate change.**

**3 Education and training must be universal and central to developing and enhancing learning and skills to support workers through the changes required by the climate crisis.**

**4 Workers themselves must have direct involvement in decisions about changes to production and services, and in processes to determine what a genuinely Just Transition looks like.**



Open Minder  
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THE  
**TRADE UNION  
CO-ORDINATING  
GROUP**

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The Trade Union Co-ordinating Group (TUCG) brings together eleven national unions (BFAWU, Equity, FBU, NAPO, NEU, NUJ, PCS, POA, RMT, UCU and URTU) to co-ordinate campaigning activities in Parliament and beyond

