



PRESS RELEASE

Leaders' Climate Summit: US must show it's ready to pay the international debt it owes towards equitable & just climate action, say civil society representatives

[Recording of the press briefing](#)

RESOURCES:

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[Media backgrounder from the Global Gas and Oil Network](#)

20 April 2021: Ahead of the Leaders' Climate Summit on 22 and 23 April, hosted by President Biden of the United States of America, speakers at a press conference organised by Climate Action Network (CAN) and the Global Gas and Oil Network (GGON) emphasised that the success of this summit hangs on the US delivering its fair and ambitious share of climate action - on drastic domestic mitigation *within this decade* and towards international cooperation and finance. The Biden administration, and other rich high-emitters, must announce the rapid phase out of all financing towards fossil fuels, especially oil and gas, both domestically and internationally, they added.

With rising climate impacts, the conversation around meeting the needs of those on the frontlines of irreversible impacts has moved on since 2015. It must now centre around an honest political reckoning on addressing Loss and Damage - a key pillar of action under the Paris Agreement. This must include a dedicated finance mechanism on Loss and Damage. The Leaders' Climate Summit must be the start of that conversation, they added.

Quotes from the speakers

Jennifer Morgan, Executive Director, Greenpeace International:

“Climate leadership means President Biden aggressively reining in fossil fuel corporations, which he has not yet done. To be regarded as a climate leader, Biden has to phase out fossil fuels at home and abroad, and support other governments to follow suit. This means unequivocally ending all direct and indirect fossil fuel subsidies. The United States must act

now to reduce absolute emissions by 70% from 2005 levels by 2030, and get on the path to zero emissions.”

Lidy Nacpil, Coordinator, Asian Peoples’ Movement on Debt and Development:

"The restaurant is about to close, the bill needs prompt paying and while a few of the people had a three-course meal, the rest just had soup. Do you seriously offer to divide the bill equally? We are at a point where we know what needs to be done to reverse the climate chaos and it boils down to this simple principle: wealthier countries, who emit more now and historically, can and should do more with their emissions reductions and delivery of climate finance."

Saleemul Huq, Director, International Centre for Climate Change & Development, Independent University, Bangladesh:

"In the last four years since President Trump came in office, the world has moved to the worse on climate change. We are no longer in 2015 but in 2021 where impacts are increasing, and emissions are set to outdo previous years. Loss and Damage is real and attributed to human-induced climate change. For President Biden, this is the moment to honestly address the issue of Loss and Damage and take steps towards leading the charge on setting up a special finance mechanism. It will be critical for the success of COP26. The Leaders' Climate Summit must be the start to that process."

Jean Su, Energy Justice Director, Center for Biological Diversity, USA, and USCAN representative:

“While we applaud President Biden for re-entering the global climate stage, the test of genuine climate leadership is whether the U.S. meets its fair share of emissions reductions as the largest historical contributor to the climate emergency. Such ambitious reductions require immediately ending the fossil fuel era, deploying just and resilient renewable energy systems, and doing so in a way that combats the country’s deep inequalities and racism that it is festering from. It is not enough that President Biden builds back better. We need to build back justly.”

Laurie van der Burg, Senior Campaigner at Oil Change International and GGON representative:

“This will not be a “Climate Leaders’ Summit” unless the United States, Canada, Norway and the United Kingdom — some of the world’s richest oil and gas producers — take decisive action to stop fossil fuel expansion. Even if coal use and production were phased out overnight, the emissions from oil and gas in existing fields alone would push the average global temperature rise beyond 1.5°C. To live up to the goals of the Paris Agreement, world leaders need to put an immediate halt to new licenses for oil and gas production whilst ensuring a just transition for workers and communities.”

“At home and abroad, these governments need to move public money out of fossil fuels and into the solutions that can create the jobs required for a green recovery from COVID-19. This includes providing debt-free and increased climate finance to low-income countries. ”

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CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

Climate Action Network (CAN) is a global network of over 1500 NGOs in more than 120 countries fighting the climate crisis. More information on www.climatenetwork.org