

SAFETY & EQUITY PRINCIPLES AND DEMANDS FOR UNFCCC COP26



NO NORMAL COP IN AN ABNORMAL TIME

The network consultations have underlined the dilemma we are facing. On the one hand, the climate crisis requires a COP for both political and technical aspects to ensure the implementation of the Paris Agreement and with the required urgency. On the other hand, the way in which the COP26 UK-presidency proposes to host this COP26 “as a normal and most inclusive COP ever” creates major concerns about the potential risks to public safety and in addition it currently seems almost impossible to be organized in a manner that allows meaningful equitable participation from both the Global South and North. For CAN, hosting a “normal and regular COP” would be challenging for several reasons:

- Ongoing vaccine inequity and queue jumping for COP participation;
- Safety concerns & and ongoing lack of clarity regarding logistics COP26;
- Significant travel route and cost challenges;
- Quarantine costs & increased travel durations;
- Travel restrictions and regulations due to Covid; and
- Non-recognition of certain vaccines.

This paper summarizes CAN’s principles and demands to ensure that COP26 is as equitable, inclusive and safe as possible.

PRINCIPLES AND DEMANDS FOR UNFCCC AND COP26 UK PRESIDENCY DESIGNATE

PRINCIPLES

- Recognise that “no one is safe until everyone is safe” and ensure vaccine equity by providing scaled-up support and solidarity for Covid responses in the Global South.
- The COP has to be fully inclusive and ensure equitable access and participation by all countries, civil society and other observers and, particularly, from the Global South. This applies to physical and virtual meetings.
- No backsliding from the regular practice of CSO engagement in the UNFCCC, with the aim to ensure consistent improvement for more meaningful engagement and participation by all stakeholders, particularly rights-holders such as Indigenous Peoples and others.
- Recognition and Protection of the democratic rights of civil society and citizens, such as the right to peaceful protest; right to assemble; and freedom of speech; amongst others.

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DEMANDS

1. ENSURE VACCINE EQUITY

To address the moral challenge of vaccine inequity, especially in the Global South, we demand that the UK government, together with other rich nations, do the following before the G20/well before COP26:

- Present a clear roadmap for the provision of support for increased vaccination in developing countries by the rich nations as a demonstration of their global commitment to address the pandemic;
- The UK government must endorse the TRIPS waiver for a People's Vaccine and also place pressure on other rich nations to do the same in order to enable local production and distribution of vaccines in developing countries; and
- Support developing countries in the provision of equipment to deal with Covid, eg. PPE, ventilators, oxygen, etc.

2. GUARANTEE AN INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE COP

1. Quotas allocated to accredited Observer organisations must reflect balanced representation.
2. Provide adequate support to ensure Global South party delegates, media, as well as civil society observer participation at COP26, with particular attention given to ensuring the participation of marginalised groups, Indigenous Peoples, women and youth.

This includes:

- Travel support to Global South participants to address the additional costs of travel due to COVID – for delegates, media and CSOs.
- Quarantine support to affected ones in the UK and any other travel stop required to get to the UK and back.
- Health care financial support to all participants as required.

It is important to consult Global South participants on the obstacles they face in order to develop appropriate solutions.

3. Whilst the safety of delegates/participants should always remain of utmost concern, civil society events and peaceful mobilisation that follow WHO safety standards should not be sacrificed in the name of public safety, while the official COP summit is permitted to go ahead, following the advice of health officials.

4. Ensure safe civil society participation in events, protest and other activities outside the official UNFCCC spaces at the Glasgow conference, including a convergence space organised by civil society, Peoples' Summit, and peaceful mobilisation, amongst others.

In the event of a 'hybrid' COP26, to ensure digital access and transparency of meetings to country delegates and civil society that should equal - or be better - than those of physical UNFCCC meetings.

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3. ENSURE A SAFE COP

Safety for all participants requires:

- Strictly following all WHO recommendations for safety, and providing clear behaviour guidelines to all participants early on to allow participants to assess their remaining risk;
- A 'safety first' protocol protecting all CoP participants in CoP and associated venues should be in place at all times - from arrival at the venue (waiting lines for clearing security) through leaving the venue (lines for collecting deposited bags/goods, etc.) and exiting;
- Safe physical space for civil society action and side events;
- Ensuring sufficient space in negotiation rooms to avoid any scenario where a room is overcrowded or where people are excluded from participating on site due to numbers. This requires detailed planning and provisions beforehand to ensure both inclusivity and safety on site; and
- Clear regulations in the city of Glasgow that would ensure that neither inhabitants of Glasgow nor visiting COP26-participants put each other at risk.

Principles for Civil Society

- Civil Society from the Global North must put pressure on their governments to accede to the demands on vaccine equity listed above.
- Civil society members from the Global North should understand the needs of its counterparts from the Global South and stand in solidarity with them, to enable their active and equitable participation at COP26.
- Where feasible, the funding needs of civil society delegates from the Global South must be prioritised to ensure their equitable participation at COP26.
- Civil Society delegations should ensure a balanced representation between Global South and North

What practical steps are needed to ensure fair and equitable representation?

1. Safety for all participants. This requires:

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- Safe physical space for civil society action and side events;
- Ensuring sufficient space in negotiation rooms to avoid any scenario where a room is overcrowded or where people are excluded from participating on site due to numbers. This requires detailed planning and provisions beforehand to ensure both inclusivity and safety on site; and
- Clear regulations in the city of Glasgow that would ensure that neither inhabitants of Glasgow nor visiting COP26-participants put each other at risk.

2. Travel support to Global South participants to address the additional costs of travel due to COVID – both delegates and CSOs.

3. Quarantine support to affected ones in the UK and any other travel stop required to get to the UK and back.

4. Health care financial support to all participants as required.