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PARLIAMENTARY MEETING ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP26)

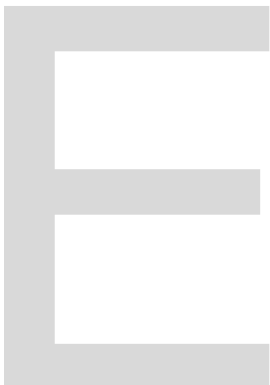
7 November 2021, Glasgow

Preliminary draft outcome document

The Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) will take place on 7 November 2021 in Glasgow, United Kingdom. The Meeting is expected to adopt an outcome document. The Meeting co-Rapporteurs, Ms. Alessia Rotta, appointed by the Italian Parliament, and Mr. Alex Sobel, appointed by the British Group of the IPU, have prepared a preliminary draft of the outcome document, as presented below. IPU Members are invited to examine the preliminary draft and provide comments and observations on its form and content by 10 September 2021 at the latest. A revised draft outcome document will be adopted at the Pre-COP26 Parliamentary Meeting in Rome, Italy, on 8-9 October 2021. The final outcome document will be finalized and adopted at the closing session of the Parliamentary Meeting at COP26 in Glasgow.

1. We, parliamentarians from around the world, gathered in Glasgow at the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the 26th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), express deep concern that the climate crisis is becoming ever more urgent, and seek to amplify international calls for concerted and coordinated climate action by all States. We strongly urge all Parties to make COP26 a turning point by adopting ambitious commitments for a green and sustainable pandemic recovery which also ensures temperature increases do not exceed 1.5°C.

2. Under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and following the agreements achieved at the Parliamentary Meeting in preparation of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) at the Italian Parliament, we have assembled at the parliamentary meeting on the occasion of COP26 in Glasgow under the UK Presidency on 7 November 2021. Our position is founded on the scientific findings of the October 2018 Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that a rise in temperature beyond 1.5°C would trigger irreversible damage to our planet and endanger biodiversity, and that the threat of such dire consequences drives our common determination for action. To this end, we endorse the objective of the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC to keep the global temperature rise well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and strongly support the requirement to secure net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Net-zero can only be achieved through international collaboration, holding all nations to ambitious commitments by supporting innovation and strengthening transparency and accountability, including through parliamentary oversight and legislative scrutiny.



3. Parliaments, with their core legislative, oversight, budgetary and representation functions, are key to ensuring the implementation of the climate change goals contained in the Paris Agreement, as well as climate change related components of the Sustainable Development Goals. Parliaments are essential for the translation of international climate change commitments into country-level action, and as climate change is a global issue which transcends borders, strong inter-parliamentary cooperation is crucial for finding international solutions that ensure all countries are able to meet these unavoidable challenges. Accounting for the diversity of our parliaments' mandates and functions, parliamentarians can also be guided by common working methods and norms, including those facilitated and promoted by the IPU. We call upon all parliamentarians to use these tools to ensure that their countries' national climate commitments and international obligations are transparently scrutinized, widely debated and most importantly, honoured.

4. We encourage parliaments to share best practices for undertaking climate impact assessments of all legislation as a matter of routine procedure. Such requirements for greater environmental accountability should empower parliaments in their work to encourage increased public and private sector funding for research and development, and wider utilization of clean energy technologies. The economic benefits of investing in technologies to support electric vehicles, renewable energy and sustainable farming are now clear and unquestionable and should be central to the economic planning and development goals of all nations.

5. We note parliaments in some countries have declared the existence of a "climate change emergency", which has emboldened governments to be more ambitious in their environmental goals. Initiatives such as these and other inclusive public outreach mechanisms, like citizen-led "climate committees", which often work in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, grassroots movements and climate activists, help underscore the value of parliamentary voices. Parliamentary dialogue and diplomacy through the IPU and other relevant parliamentary organizations is key to raising awareness of the complexities of the challenge and the need for urgent action to address the serious impacts occurring right now in many of our communities.

6. As legislators, we must ensure our countries can take full advantage of the opportunities for a green post-COVID-19 recovery. While the pandemic exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, it also helped reaffirm the importance of resetting the path to one which is more inclusive, equal and sustainable. Post-pandemic recovery and rebuilding strategies provide a once-in-a-generation opportunity to advance green solutions to both national challenges and common international objectives. The agreed undertakings addressing climate challenges can guide us towards a sustainable recovery, now being better prepared and determined to "build back better". All countries are called upon to submit enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions which are ambitious and updated to reflect our revised plans to address the changed circumstances created by the pandemic and its impacts. If the last two years have taught us anything it is that "prevention is better than cure", and that this applies equally to our own health as it does to the health of our planet.

7. We must also recognize that biodiversity loss and climate change increase the risk of zoonotic transmission, the consequences of which can lead to serious disease outbreaks and global pandemics. Climate change and global biodiversity loss, therefore, pose a significant risk to public health. By adopting circular economy models and using natural resources sustainably and responsibly, we can protect against future pandemics and better shield vulnerable populations. To this degree, we recognize that the pressures placed on health services, particularly those of low-income countries, can be alleviated by green policy measures, complementing efforts to improve access and equity through a movement towards universal health coverage (UHC).

8. We recognize that environment issues are cross-cutting, with implications for all social, economic and security policies, and climate justice must be central to achieving all our national goals and ambitions, with particular attention to the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in our societies. We note that the global pandemic has created an incentive for countries to adopt more inclusive and sustainable models of urbanization to drive economic recovery, enhance social cohesion, and address climate change challenges. This can be achieved through more effective town planning, harnessing the potential offered by digitalization to provide and receive services online, removing the need to travel and, as a result, reducing emissions.

9. Greater climate ambition can be key to resolving national and regional conflicts and crises and can also be a crucial factor in securing a new and more inclusive wave of multilateral participation, while driving support for the economic and social growth of developing countries. Special attention must be paid to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and States susceptible to serious, if not existential, risk because of specific geographic or climatic vulnerabilities. Sea-level rise, extreme weather effects, drought, fire and flood can all exacerbate development challenges and erase decades of social and economic progress. Due attention must be paid to water resource issues, as a vital part of any global effort to address the impacts of climate change. In the same regard, there must be greater priority accorded to the oceans by integrating policy on climate change, maritime security, fisheries and ocean biodiversity as part of a cohesive approach to better serve the longer-term interests of SIDS.

10. We strongly support the goal of reaching net-zero but are concerned about the challenges surrounding its achievement. We recognize the necessity for governments to have varied targets and individual climate plans based upon national circumstances. However, this provision for varying levels of ambition should not allow the undermining of efforts to achieve net-zero, and we would be concerned if carbon leakage occurred as a result. Another risk to climate ambition is transnational emissions, which so far have not been accounted for in international negotiations, particularly those of the aviation and shipping industries. This is also relevant to the environmental impacts of global trade, which must be a core factor considered in future multilateral trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO), including provisions in such agreements to incentivize green trade and endorse renewable energy.

11. We call for the introduction of a mechanism to calculate transnational emissions which fairly apportions national responsibility accounting for these emissions in assessing global reductions. We also strongly support the creation of a transnational mechanism to monitor adherence to greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, welcoming the contribution which will be made by the UNFCCC Global Stocktake publishing its findings in 2023. The adoption of an equitable emissions trading system through the finalization of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement will provide an important mechanism to counteract climate dumping and provide for functioning global carbon markets to enable achievement of collective emissions reductions targets.

12. It is essential that we mobilize sufficient climate finance at COP26. We call for enhanced funding for low income countries, particularly SIDS, to enable them to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change, to which they are so vulnerable. As an urgent necessity, we support a significant shift and enhancement in financial, technological and capacity-building assistance for developing countries towards adaptation rather than mitigation and attention to avoiding any obstacles to such countries accessing dedicated climate-related financing and support. Sustainable finance should create a level playing field for these countries and take into account all the costs incurred, utilizing the UNFCCC's Santiago Network to make significant steps in advancing an effective international mechanism for loss and damage as part of an inclusive, comprehensive and ambitious COP26 outcome. We recognize the added burden which elevated levels of public debt imposes on lower income and small island States. We call for the provision of fiscal space and assurance of debt sustainability to ensure that these States can meet their climate change commitments.

13. We emphasize the role that science and technology play in implementing policies that support adaptation and mitigation. More specifically, the development of AI predictive models can increase our understanding of complex climate change phenomena and the future consequences they may have. We welcome investment in, and use of, such scientific and technological resources to assist energy transition and mitigation projects and support comprehensive efforts to ensure appropriate technology transfer to vulnerable States. While the opportunity to secure a net-zero pathway is narrowing, it is still possible with the immediate and large-scale deployment of clean and efficient energy technologies, combined with an international commitment to accelerate research and innovation. As stated in a recent report by the International Energy Agency, a fast and largescale energy transition cannot be achieved without citizen engagement. The support and participation of citizens is essential to ensure the adoption and financing of green alternatives, including taking full advantage of advances in renewable energy.

14. Climate change also poses a significant threat to global food security. Any reduction in biodiversity combined with changing weather patterns reduces crop yields and results in food shortages. The global response to climate change today, therefore, determines how we feed future generations tomorrow. Such food insecurity makes it impossible to eradicate poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We strongly support the Food and Agriculture Organization's strategy on adaptation and mitigation in agricultural sectors and call for a global commitment to its principles of assisting the transformation of farming methods in developing countries as a key to climate action.

15. United by our common goals and purpose as parliamentarians, we have gathered in Glasgow in parallel to COP26 to reiterate our abiding commitment to democracy and multilateralism in the long-standing spirit of the IPU. We utilize the IPU's standing as the world's oldest multilateral political organization, founded on the important principle that international cooperation and dialogue are the most effective means to address our common global challenges, as our platform to send a clear and unequivocal message. Faced with the existential threat of climate change to many of the most vulnerable people in our countries, as nations emerge from the darkest days of the pandemic with renewed vision and resolve to "build back better", we urge our respective national leadership and expert negotiators to seize the moment in Glasgow. An emergency confronts us and it is imperative we take the fullest advantage of the United Kingdom's leadership and commitment as COP President, in partnership with Italy, to resolve all outstanding issues from the Paris Agreement and act to attain the highest level of ambition to protect the planet and safeguard the security and prosperity of our citizens, now and for future generations.