



Women in Black London

Climate Change – an issue of security and of justice

What is the UN Climate COP?

The UN Climate COP (Conference of the Parties) convenes annually, with the first meeting in Berlin in 1995. This year COP 30 will convene in Belem, Brazil from 10-21 November. It will be held in the Amazon Rainforest, one of the planet's most critical and fragile ecosystems. Civil society groups have said that the key priorities for world leaders attending the conference should be:

- Conserve and advance sustainable development in tropical forests
- Scale up climate finance
- Strengthen national and regional climate action
- Accelerate a just energy transition

Why is the COP important to us?

A recent report from the Joint Intelligence Committee advised that the UK's national security is under severe threat from the climate crisis and the looming collapse of vital natural ecosystems, with food shortages and economic disaster potentially just years away. However, the report's publication has been delayed. Food is the biggest risk as the UK imports an increasing proportion of its food from overseas, some of it coming from areas known to be at risk of climate disaster and ecosystem collapse. Migration from countries worst affected by the climate and biodiversity crises will also have an impact on society and the economy. According to UNHCR, over the past decade, extreme climate-related events triggered an average of 21.5 million new displacements per year, more than twice as many refugees caused by conflicts. Women and children are particularly affected.

Climate change is already causing severe devastation globally and, as temperatures continue to rise, the risks are increasing too. In the 2015 Paris Agreement, governments committed to limit the rise in the global average temperature to 'well below' 2°C above pre-industrial levels, ideally 1.5°C. Progress towards these goals is, however, way off track. Governments commit to preparing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with their climate plans, but these have fallen short of the targets.

Developing countries need finance to reduce their emissions, adapt to the impacts of climate change and deal with the devastation it is causing (known as 'loss and damage'). The provision of 'climate finance' is therefore critical. At present, the climate emergency represents a deep injustice – those forced to flee, and the communities hosting them, are the least responsible for carbon emissions yet are paying the highest price. At past COPs governments have also committed to 'transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems', tripling renewable energy by 2030 – but enormous pressure is put against these targets by oil producing companies and nations, not helped by the current leadership of the United States.

What will the UK do?

COP30 will be attended by Keir Starmer (at the leader's summit) and by the Prince of Wales and Ed Miliband, as Minister for Net Zero, and the UK has committed to playing its part. But claims that climate change is not an issue need to be vigorously addressed, including publishing the Intelligence Committee report and plans implemented.

For more information on COP see: www.unsdsn.org/resources/cop-resource-hub?utm_source=



Women in Black hold vigils every Wednesday between 6-7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the National Portrait Gallery, St. Martin's Place, London WC2. Our vigils are silent, women-only and, if possible, we wear black. We welcome all women who support our call for an end to militarism and war.

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Donations for leaflets most welcome

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