



# GLOBAL CENTER ON ADAPTATION HIGH-LEVEL COMMUNIQUE: THE ADAPTATION ACCELERATION IMPERATIVE FOR COP26

## THE GLOBAL CLIMATE IMPACT ESCALATION

The findings of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report publication of August 2021 confirm that our planet is warming faster than previously thought. We are now on track to reach 1.5 degrees Celsius (1.5°C) of warming above pre-industrial levels by the 2030s. The next decade will see the Earth further heat up by approximately half of all the 1.1°C of global warming experienced throughout the entire period spanning the advent of the industrial era in the nineteenth century until today. This alarming acceleration in the pace of warming we face in the immediate future is unprecedented for human society. As these changes unfold, climate impacts, anomalies, and extremes – heatwaves and droughts, extreme rainfall and floods, storms, wildfires, and much else – will become far more severe and powerful: for some phenomenon, like extreme heat spells, impacts will nearly double.

## FAR GREATER CLIMATE SHOCKS ALREADY 'LOCKED-IN'

The most drastic emission reductions in the coming decades are just able to prevent warming beyond 1.5°C. But the far more powerful warming and climate impacts of the next decade are, tragically, already locked in. Such climatic changes will put people, communities, and the world economy in harm's way like never before, and will bring major new threats to biodiversity and human health. The world must act now.

## COP26 MUST ACT TO ACCELERATE ADAPTATION

The gathering of the international community in Glasgow for COP26 presents a unique opportunity for collective action. The world must accelerate and scale-up its effort to stay within 1.5°C warming. In parallel, adaptation is urgent. Adaptation has not benefited from the same attention, resources, or level of action on the ground as mitigation, leaving communities worldwide exposed to a climate emergency unfolding faster than predicted. Adaptation can no longer go under-prioritized. It is

imperative for COP26 to launch an acceleration in adaptation efforts to enable the world to keep pace with this most profound and far-reaching emergency. COP26 cannot succeed without advancing adaptation to an equal priority with the mitigation of carbon emissions.

## WE FACE THIS CHALLENGE TOGETHER

At our High-Level Dialogue today, we heard from leaders and representatives of African nations whose communities are facing crushing climatic stresses for agriculture, health and nutrition, and living conditions, driving people to crowded and high-risk slums and into complex, extra-regional migration chains. We heard from small island developing states and atoll nations, who have highlighted the existential risk to their territories, ways of life and resources, as coastal erosion and sea-level rise accelerate. We heard from climate-threatened developing nations and the members of the Climate Vulnerable Forum from around the world, who have been battered by the dual shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic alongside unusually severe flooding, drought and storms, setting back hard-won development gains. We heard from wealthy nations with the most advanced technologies and capabilities, that are finding current extremes in heat, floods and wildfires are already overwhelming. We also heard from leaders in the international finance and development community, that the international system to for a rapid acceleration of adaptation action globally.

## WE HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO ACT

Despite the daunting situation we face, our High-Level Dialogue was also optimistic for the future: the world already has enough ingenuity, resources, and funds at hand to rise to the challenge of the climate emergency. We inaugurated on this day the largest floating office in the world, which will henceforth serve as the headquarters of the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) and an embodiment of the solutions already within our reach that we must put into action throughout society if we



are to persevere through this planetary crisis. Transformative change can happen quickly: the way we live and work has been upended and radically altered in ways we would never have imagined since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Governments have

made unprecedented interventions and invested enormous resources into supporting jobs, livelihoods, and whole sectors of economies. In a matter of months, the politically impossible became the economically indispensable.

## THE COP26 ADAPTATION ACCELERATION IMPERATIVE

We, thereby, outlined the vital steps needed for COP26 to serve as a springboard for an urgently needed large-scale acceleration in adaptation and resilience building, as follows:

### AMBITION

- We must sustain ambition demonstrated with the significant strengthening of adaptation in the latest Paris Agreement Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to ensure that the levels of adaptation ambition of every nation are fully updated and aligned with science and the new reality of a planet living through a fast-worsening climate emergency: stronger new NDCs and adaptation plans are needed by all.
- We must also continue to constantly raise adaptation ambition year-on-year to keep pace with this new phase of high-rate global heating throughout the present decade, a pathway that COP26 can establish.

### FINANCE

- We must rebuild confidence in international climate finance: clear delivery on the UN-agreed annual \$100 billion where financial flows for adaptation must be on par with financial flows for mitigation.
- We must pave the way to shift the trillions necessary into adaptation and resilience investments to support higher ambition and ever-bolder efforts to adapt our world, promoting innovative financing and unlocking the full potential of the private sector.
- We must leverage pandemic recovery resources for maximum climate benefit, including considering partial channeling of the \$650 billion of newly allocated International Monetary Fund Special Drawing Rights as potential additional concessional support for building resilience, particularly in poor and climate-vulnerable countries, and small developing states.

### PARTNERSHIPS

- We must seize the opportunity of COP26 to spur collaboration: with the world more connected than ever, only by supporting each other and forging shared solutions to shared crises of the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis can we prevail.
- We must encourage all stakeholders to mainstream adaptation into every day business, community and social decision-making to prepare for and respond to an increasingly climate-disruptive world: new approaches to assess and manage risks of all kinds must be incorporated into every corner of our societies.
- We must promote bold and innovative partnerships for action to support the most vulnerable communities, such as through the GCA, African Development Bank and African Union's Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program, which is mobilizing \$25 billion to drive transformational adaptation actions on the African continent, and seeks to propel locally-led adaptation efforts.



## THE URGENCY TO ACT AT COP26

We invite the international community to move on these priorities with urgency and, in light of the science and the realities on the ground, bring renewed commitment for a truly breakthrough international effort to COP26 in Glasgow. The risks of a global pandemic were known but not fully appreciated, and certainly not acted upon. Even now, even with economic activity rebounding,

we continue to fly blind as we struggle to contain the spread of COVID-19 infections. The climate emergency is different: we fully appreciate the bulk of its risks and the actions needed to address them. Delaying the necessary action will only drive up the costs, suffering and uncertainty for society and the world economy. We simply cannot wait.

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*The GCA High-Level Dialogue: An Adaptation Acceleration Imperative for COP26 was convened on 6 September 2021 at the organization's newly inaugurated floating office in Rotterdam harbor by Ban Ki-moon, 8th Secretary-General of the United Nations and Co-Chair of the Board of the Global Center on Adaptation; Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund; Feike Sijbesma, Co-Chair of the Board of the Global Center on Adaptation, and Patrick Verkooijen, CEO of the Global Center on Adaptation. This Communique is a Chair's summary of the deliberations, adopted in the presence of the Co-Conveners.*

*We express sincere thanks and deep gratitude to the host government of the Netherlands, and to all of GCA's partners and supporters for their commitment to our mission, which GCA will continue to work tirelessly to fulfil by driving bold adaptation initiatives and action for a climate resilient future for all.*

## HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPANTS OF THE GCA HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE: AN ADAPTATION ACCELERATION IMPERATIVE FOR COP26

**Ban Ki-moon**, GCA Board Chair & 8th UN Secretary-General

**Kristalina Georgieva**, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

**Feike Sijbesma**, GCA Board Co-Chair & UN High-Level Climate Champion on Private Sector for COP26

**Félix Antoine Tshisekedi**, President, Democratic Republic of Congo & Chair of the African Union

**Patrick Verkooijen**, Chief Executive Officer, GCA

**Ahmed Aboutaleb**, Mayor, Rotterdam, the Netherlands

**Akinwumi Adesina**, President, African Development Bank Group

**Desmond Alugnao**, Member, Green Africa Youth Organization

**Abul Kalam Azad**, Special Envoy, Climate Vulnerable Forum Presidency

**Peter Bakker**, President and Chief Executive Officer, World Business Council for Sustainable Development

**Jan Peter Balkenende**, Chairman, Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition

**Eve Bazaiba**, Deputy Prime Minister, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of Congo

**James Birch**, Senior Programme Officer, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

**Matt Brittin**, President, EMEA Business & Operations, Google

**Tom de Bruijn**, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, the Netherlands

**Jagan Chapagain**, Secretary-General, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



**Mathias Cormann**, Secretary-General, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
**Rola Dashti**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia  
**Ibrahima Diong**, Director-General, African Risk Capacity Group  
**Janine Alm Ericson**, State Secretary for International Development Cooperation, Sweden  
**Patricia Espinosa**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  
**Yasmine Fouad**, Minister of Environment, Arab Republic of Egypt  
**Yannick Glemarec**, Executive Director, Green Climate Fund  
**Paul Hilbers**, Executive Director, International Monetary Fund  
**Gilbert F. Hounqbo**, President, International Fund for Agricultural Development  
**Werner Hoyer**, President, European Investment Bank  
**Karin Isaksson**, Managing Director, Nordic Development Fund  
**Aksel Jakobsen**, State Secretary for International Development, Norway  
**Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete**, Chair, GWP Southern Africa & 4th President of the Republic of Tanzania  
**Rodolfo Lacy**, Director for the Environment, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
**Ronald Lapperre**, Director-General, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands  
**Lotte Machon**, State Secretary for Development Policy, Denmark  
**José Antonio Meade**, Board Member, Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation  
**Amina J. Mohammed**, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations  
**A.K. Abdul Momen**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh  
**Andrea Meza Murillo**, Minister of Environment and Energy, Costa Rica  
**Mithika Mwenda**, Executive Director, Pan African Climate Justice Alliance  
**Mohamed Nasheed**, Speaker of the People's Majlis, Maldives  
**Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, Director-General, World Trade Organization  
**Vijay Rangarajan**, Director-General, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, UK  
**Odile Renaud-Basso**, President, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development  
**Huang Runqiu**, Minister of Ecology and Environment, People's Republic of China  
**Mark Rutte**, Prime Minister, the Netherlands  
**Jamal Saghir**, Professor of Practice, McGill University  
**Vera Songwe**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa  
**Mohammed Adjei Sowah**, Mayor, Accra, Ghana  
**Simon Stiell**, Minister for Climate Resilience and Environment, Grenada  
**Frans Timmermans**, Executive Vice-President, European Commission  
**Keriako Tobiko**, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya  
**Axel van Trotsenburg**, Managing Director of Operations, World Bank  
**Barbara Visser**, Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management, The Netherlands  
**Lee White**, Minister of Forests, Oceans, Environment and Climate Change, Gabon