

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

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SL: Protests, Politicians, and (Empty?) Promises: Your Guide to Glasgow

The Takeaway:

- World leaders are meeting in Scotland this week and next to decide... oh, just the fate of the world. This week, we bring you a quick guide to the 26th annual climate conference known as COP — what's at stake, what to expect, and what comes next.
- Activists around the world have called on COP attendees to use this opportunity to reject false climate solutions, commit to a transformative, worker-first agenda, and fight for global climate justice.
- So far, with the exception of one major announcement on public financing of fossil fuels, COP26 is not looking like it will be the source of the radical change that we need. But the people-powered movements that have shown up in the struggle give us hope that we might yet realize the better world that we so desperately need.

COP26: What You Need To Know

Mass protests, awkward [photo ops](#), and grand speeches — all this can only mean one thing: it's time for COP26. World leaders have descended on Glasgow, Scotland this week for the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change — aka COP26 — to discuss, negotiate, and coordinate national commitments to address climate change. There's no way to capture every moment of COP in a single newsletter, but for this week's Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief, we bring you a quick guide to the basics of what you need to know about this week and next:

What's at stake?

The climate crisis is here. Without an unprecedented, dramatic rupture with the status quo, the earth and all of its inhabitants — and especially those that are already oppressed and vulnerable — will be condemned to a future in which vast swathes of the globe are rendered uninhabitable, untold millions will die, and countless more will be left to struggle through natural disasters, famine, disease, and war. On the other hand, if seized properly, this moment of crisis can be the impetus for the birth of a radically transformed world order — one where every human's basic needs are met, where prosperity and equity reign, and where people and planet come before corporate profits. In short, we face a choice: build a world for the many, or face extinction.

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What do we want from COP26?

No one expects this radical overhaul to be realized in full this week or next. But given the enormity of what's at stake, movements and activists from around the world are calling on world leaders to use COP26 as an opportunity to show their commitment to the transformational change that's needed. Here are the three broad [demands](#) being made by organizations across the world as a part of the COP26 coalition:

- **No More Cooking The Books** — World leaders must reject false solutions and fight for real change. That means targeting a temperature rise of no more than 1.5°C, immediately [ending all new fossil fuel investments](#) at home and abroad, saying no to “market-based” mechanisms, rejecting the assumption that non-existent and unproven technologies will save us, and eschewing false targets like *Net Zero*, which, in [a letter](#) signed by 350 organizations including Win Without War, is described as a “dangerous distraction.”
- **Rewire the System** — There is no solving the climate crisis without transforming the entire extractivist, exploitative economic system that caused it. For both moral and practical reasons, the transition off of fossil fuels must be [rooted in justice](#). It must put the working class first, center care work currently predominantly done by unpaid or underpaid women, migrants, and people of color, and work toward “people-owned decentralised energy systems, expansion of care services, locally-sourced food, green and affordable housing and public transport, and more.”
- **Global Climate Justice** — Climate action must be based on who has historically profited from the extractive economy, and who has historically suffered — that means [reparations](#) and redistribution to Indigenous communities and the [Global South](#). Climate obligations must be equal to each country's [fair share](#) of responsibility for the crisis, and these obligations include the [cancellation](#) of Global South debts, adequate grant-based [climate finance](#) for those on the frontline of the climate crisis, and a collective commitment to providing reparations for [loss and damage](#) in the Global South.

So what's been accomplished?

So far, a few major announcements have come out of COP: a pledge by 70 countries to reduce methane emissions by 30 percent by 2030; an agreement by 105 signatories to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030; and a [commitment](#) by over 20 governments, including the United States, to end public financing for fossil fuel projects abroad by the end of next year. These are hard fought victories, and positive signs of the direction of commitments. But the devil is in the details — for the most part, commitments out of COP are inadequate, non-binding, and [unenforceable](#), and many activists, tired of broken promises, remain wary that these are meant for much but publicity. From [methane](#), to [deforestation](#), to [fossil fuel financing](#) much remains to be done. So while this may be a “we'll believe it when we see it” moment, the pledges are still welcome steps forward, and a sign that the pressure of our movements' is starting to be felt.

So what's the reality?

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While these agreements may be signs of progress, there are a few challenges out of COP that are worth noting. The first disappointment is in the attendance. Thanks to visa restrictions, accreditation problems, and inequality in access to Covid-19 vaccines, COP26 is [proving to be](#) “one of the whitest and most privileged, ever,” excluding many of the communities who will bear the heaviest burden of the costs of climate change. Those most *responsible* for the crisis, however, have kept their seat at the table — despite promises by COP organizers, the oil industry has been given a [platform](#) at the event. Meanwhile, President Biden used *his* platform to [double down](#) on the false promise of “market-based solutions,” and new U.S.-China Cold War [antagonisms](#) appear to be [impeding](#) much-needed global cooperation.

What comes next?

Despite the demands, and even some tangible wins, one thing was clear from the start: the wholesale radical change we need was never going to come from inside the COP conference center. Our hopes of averting the worst of the climate crisis and building a better future live in the movements that have mobilized outside: activists in the Philippines [demanding](#) the Asian Development Bank end fossil fuel financing; thousands of young people [fighting for](#) their futures in the UK; Indonesians [protesting](#) their government’s failures on deforestation; hunger strikers in the United States putting their bodies [on the line](#) in the hopes of saving a generational opportunity to invest in climate solutions; and, especially, the Indigenous communities that have long been on the [forefront](#) of environmental sustainability, [struggling for](#) their land, sovereignty, and global sustainability. What the politicians do at COP26 is important. But the world we want will be built by *and for* the people. And the mobilizations that have taken place this week are reason to be hopeful that that world is already in the making.

BURIED LEDES

The results are in! **The Cairo Institute for Human Rights’s Spoilers of Peace Ceremony has concluded with a list of [nine primary spoilers](#) of peace in Yemen:** from Boris Johnson to Mohammed bin Salman. (We’ll skip the acceptance speeches on this one).

Halloween may be over, but for the Pentagon, it’s *always* the right time to tell scary stories about an invented bogeyman. Read **POGO’s analysis of the Pentagon’s insatiable need to [invent new threats](#) to justify its soaring budget.**

Military officials involved in the sentencing hearing of Guantanamo Bay prisoner Majid Khan wrote [a clemency letter](#) condemning his torture at the hands of the CIA — an [unprecedented](#) acknowledgement of a program still shrouded in secrecy.

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A Dept. of Defense review [has found](#) “no evidence of misconduct” in the August 29 drone strike in Kabul that killed 10 civilians... despite [video evidence](#) that clearly showed a child in the strike zone. Accountability? The Pentagon doesn't know the meaning of the word.

...And at least two members of Congress want answers. Chair of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, Adam Schiff, [said](#) he was “unconvinced” that the report “provides for real accountability,” and Rep. Ilhan Omar has [called for](#) a full inquiry into this and the entire drone program.

Hundreds of thousands of Sudanese people have taken to the streets to [protest the military takeover](#) of the government last Monday. On the ground, people are chanting: “*No for military rule, yes for civilian rule*” — and they demand to be heard.

Ethiopia's civil war is tragically escalating, with the President [declaring a state of emergency](#) as Tigrayan forces near the capitol. One recent [UN report](#) documented mass atrocities on both sides.

For the first time in 400 years, an Indigenous tradition has been revived in the waters of Lake Michigan. Last week, artist Wayne Valliere [floated](#) a hand-built birchbark canoe in the lake — and just in time for [Native American Heritage Month](#).

And finally, nobody does sales quite like Dolly Parton — **with [a ‘husband reveal’ 50 years in the making](#).**