



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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Dear Prime Minister

International Court of Justice affirms states' legal duty to protect the climate

We are writing to you from WILPF UK (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) to share our satisfaction that you and Ed Miliband, the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, are attending the United Nations Conference of Parties (COP) in Brazil this week. WILPF is pleased to note that you recognise the importance of negotiated international decisions made within the UN framework. We note that the Prince of Wales also addressed COP30 in Belém, marking the "pivotal moment" that "demands courage, cooperation, and unwavering commitment to our planet's future".

The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has emphasised to the COP that fossil fuel corporations are obstructing progress towards maintaining 1.5 degrees carbon emissions. The International Court of Justice has affirmed that states have a legal duty to protect the climate, and that expanding fossil fuel production could constitute international wrongful acts. The world needs the UK to take a lead on fossil fuels and sign up to a UN treaty (FFNPT) stopping the unnecessary extraction of oil gas and coal. The UK also needs to drop corporate courts from our trade agreements – their existence threatens climate action and adds to the cost of the green transition.

The COP30 host, Brazil's President Lula da Silva, has tabled a carefully prepared Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF). This could be a game changer in the struggle to maintain the climate sink of the tropical rain forests. The proposal is to establish a fund (£95 billion) invested in bonds, the returns from which would pay the communities conserving the standing tropical forests, including recognising the importance of indigenous communities. WILPF UK is extremely disappointed to hear that the UK will not be contributing to this scheme. The money is there. It is being wasted on an expanding arms budget. Meanwhile at home the Climate and Nature Bill has failed to receive support from the government.

You were right when you said that "the greater our collective ambition, the more progress we make in tackling the climate crisis and the greater opportunities that we create". It is collective ambition, and crucially collective action, that gives us hope. We note that the government's Carbon Budget and Growth Delivery Plan is stronger on carbon reduction delivery and stronger on making life much better for people with lower bills, cleaner air, warmer homes. However, there appears to be a disjointed approach from government with a commitment to climate and nature action one day, while the very next day the Chancellor considers slashing funding for more energy-efficient homes, or the government greenlights the expansion of airports, and fails to rule out the looming potential of more oil and gas with Rosebank.

Finally, COP30 is calling for implementation. It offers the international community the opportunity to create a proper fund of \$3.1 billion to mitigate the increasing effects of climate catastrophes upon the small nations, for example in the Pacific. The recent storms affecting the Caribbean, the Philippines and Pakistan have demonstrated the huge pressures being faced in the Global South. It is essential that the UK supports this effort.

Yours in peace

Fiona McOwan, National Secretary, for WILPF UK Executive Committee

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