

## 'United in frustration'

### **Young climate activists create global Mock COP26 to drive climate action and challenge world leaders to do better**

*More than 350 delegates from 145 countries unite for two-week virtual climate conference*

**19 November - 01 December 2020**

- Mock COP26 is an online alternative to postponed COP26, organised by students across the globe to demand more action from world leaders on the climate crisis.
- More than 350 young delegates selected from 145 countries, to outline the views of young people from the countries they represent.
- Delegates will produce a collective final statement that will be developed into a formal treaty, which national governments could adopt into law.
- Over 800 young people have applied to attend Mock COP26, with the highest number of applicants from India, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines.
- High profile speakers include the UN Envoy on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake and the COP26 Champion for UN Climate Talks, Nigel Topping.

**Monday 09 November 2020:** More than 350 young delegates from across the world will come together in 10 days for a two-week virtual conference to demand more action on climate change and social justice from world leaders. In the month when the now-postponed COP26 was due to take place in Glasgow, student activists are taking the opportunity to show the world what would happen if young people ran COP26.

Mock COP26 is borne of young people's increasing frustration at years of inaction from global leaders on the climate crisis, exacerbated by the postponement of COP26 until November 2021. The virtual alternative to COP26 is being coordinated by a team of 18 student staff and 196 volunteer students from 52 countries, supported by educational charity Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK).

**Pauline Owiti, Mock COP26 organiser, Kenya, said:** *"I believe young people are a major resource for development and key agents for change. The involvement of young people in decision making should be a priority, as we have the power to solve the challenges we face in the world. Yet we are often sidelined. With Mock COP26 we have the opportunity to contribute something meaningful to society and change the perception of youth leadership."*

Mock COP26 will equip and empower youth around the world to engage their political leaders on climate targets and will culminate in a powerful statement outlining what leaders should agree to at COP26 - and what young people of the world should do in the absence of sufficient global ambition.

Environmental law charity ClientEarth will support the students throughout the conference, to develop the final statement into a legal treaty which national governments could adopt into law.

Over 800 young people across the globe applied to take part in Mock COP26, with the highest number of applicants coming from India, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. There is consensus amongst young people that voices in the Global South are not being heard, resulting in a determination to ensure that students from the Global South, and marginalised voices, are represented and heard at the conference.

The conference will feature empowering keynotes and panels by global names and youth activists, including the UN Envoy on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake and the COP26 Champion for UN Climate Talks, Nigel Topping. The discussions will be framed around five conference themes: climate justice, climate education, health and mental health, green jobs, and carbon reduction targets (NDCs), and the focus will be on speakers from the Global South and marginalised groups.

**Jayathma Wickramanayake, UN Envoy on Youth said:** *"I am delighted to see so many young climate leaders from around the world coming together to organise Mock COP26, and making a commitment to continue amplifying marginalised voices within the climate movement. Young people worldwide – and particularly those in the developing world – are already disproportionately experiencing the worst impacts of climate change. They will also be the ones facing the long-term consequences of climate decisions made by world leaders today.*

*"I join them in asking decision-makers everywhere to take the climate crisis seriously and commit to meaningful action on climate change so that we can ensure a healthy and sustainable planet for generations to come."*

Each country's delegation will have an opportunity to make a high-level statement outlining the views of young people from the countries they represent, with more time allocated to countries from the Global South, and those facing the most severe impact from our changing climate.

The conference will culminate in a powerful final statement to world leaders from the youth of the world, raising ambition for COP26. Delegates will then be supported and mentored to engage and lobby their domestic politicians in the run up to COP26.

You can keep up to date with Mock COP26 on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and by following the hashtags #MockCOP26 and #ForTheYouthByTheYouth.

**ENDS**

For more information, interviews and images, please contact:

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **About Mock COP**

Mock COP is coordinated by a group of young climate activists from across the globe, mostly from the Fridays for the Future International Committee, united in their frustration at the speed of progress from world leaders on combating climate change and its effects.

The student staff team is made up of 18 students from Australia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Costa Rica, India, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, Philippines, Solomon Islands and the UK.

Mock COP26 is being held from 19 November 2020 to the 01 December 2020.

Mock COP26 is sponsored by [Clim8 Invest](#) and Zoom and has been funded by over 400 individuals through the student's [crowdfunder](#). Other funders include The Golden Bottle Trust, UMI Fund and We Have The POWER.

For more information, please visit <https://www.mockcop.org/>.

Please view case studies and photos of the coordinating team: [at this link](#)

New video on YouTube: [at this link](#)

New video MP4 format: [at this link](#)

Photography of students and graphics for media: [at this link](#)

### **About Students Organising for Sustainability International**

Students Organising for Sustainability International is an international network of student-led organisations working together to collaborate on research, campaigns and communications in response to the climate emergency and ecological crisis. It is hosted by Danske Studerendes Fællesråd, the National Union of Students in Denmark.

For more information, please visit <https://sos.earth/>.

### **About Students Organising for Sustainability UK**

SOS-UK is a charity set up by students and staff at the National Union of Students in the UK in 2019 in response to the climate emergency and ecological crisis. It exists to

support students to be the change that society urgently needs to get us out of the climate emergency and ecological crisis, and to deliver climate justice. SOS-UK the UK chapter or SOS-International.

For more information, please visit [www.sos-uk.org](http://www.sos-uk.org).