



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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27 September 2023

Dear Prime Minister

Climate emergency – a serious cause of global conflict

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF UK) is shocked and dismayed by your recent statement changing government policies intended to address the climate crisis. Targets for greenhouse gas emissions set for years ahead, and lauding past UK reductions, are meaningless in the face of the serious nature of the current climate threats to the planet.

The British public has watched with alarm and despair this summer's forest fires in Canada, devastating floods in Libya and soaring temperatures in Europe. They know that this crisis is created by human behaviour in burning fossil fuels.

This scale of death and devastation demands urgent immediate action by everyone.

Even if the electorate wanted it, this deadline is not something to delay for electoral popularity. All our individual actions matter. When you fly or take a helicopter for a journey within the UK, you are telling the public that there is not a serious climate crisis. But voters know this is not true and your decision will not win the popularity you seek. Granting licences for the future extraction of oil or coal when there is already sufficient above ground for the world's needs, says to everyone that profit from polluting industries is more important than the lives of our children. The longer we sell petrol and diesel cars, install gas boilers, and fail to insulate our homes, the more extreme and the more frequent the climate emergencies will become. To use your words a "proportionate and realistic approach" is actually a vigorous and urgent one.

Life would be much easier for the hard-pressed public with support for cheap, good, publicly owned transport, buses and trains to stop people having to rely on cars.

As a women's organisation we are aware that it is women that carry the family burden when the floods and droughts hit in the poorest and least prepared areas of the world as the direct result of behaviours in the richest states. We do not have time to wait for unproven technology to be available. All the world's climate scientists are telling you that this is a bad action, and only those with a strong financial interest in the status quo want to see it continue. Even the car manufacturers and supporting industries are working hard to reach the original target.

WILPF has more than one hundred years' experience of investigating and making known the root causes of conflict and war. We perceive this climate emergency, which is

displacing people and creating refugees, to be a serious cause of global conflict that will impact everyone.

We look forward to hearing that you have re-thought your policy towards this urgent climate emergency.

Yours in peace

Paula Shaw
National Secretary
for WILPF UK Executive Committee

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