



The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
COP President Designate
9 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AG

Darren Jones MP
Chair, BEIS Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

3 September 2021

Dear Darren,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July seeking further information on some of the issues raised during the recent evidence session attended by my colleagues on the role of business, the public and civil society at COP26.

Vaccine Offer to Non-accredited groups

I appreciate your concerns around the extent to which non-accredited groups will be able to access and engage with the conference. As you rightly mentioned, and I have set out, the Government is working to ensure the summit is inclusive, which means amplifying the voices of those on the front line of climate change. Tackling the climate emergency cannot wait and requires representatives from the whole globe sitting around the same table in Glasgow this November. The UK, UNFCCC and partners are working to provide vaccines to Party, observer and media representatives who have registered to attend COP and are unable to get them otherwise. Registration for the vaccine offer is now closed, and we are now working closely with the UN and partners on delivering this offer as quickly and efficiently as possible.

For non-accredited stakeholders, the Green Zone, which is fully managed and delivered by the UK Government, is available for participation through events, exhibitions, workshops and talks. This will enable them to contribute to the conference in a meaningful way. There are no plans for vaccines to be required for access to the Green Zone, but full vaccination is strongly encouraged for all those attending COP26.

In-person COP

As I have previously said, our intention remains to hold COP26 in-person. Much like other major international events, the way COP26 will operate has been adapted to mitigate the risk of COVID-19. We are working closely with our public health officials, the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council, delivery partners and the UNFCCC to deliver an in-person event to enable participation on equal footing, while also making use of technology to make support virtual participation if required.

Parliamentarian Attendance

On 21 July, I wrote to all Parliamentarians to invite them to register their interest in attending COP26 and to specify which theme days they would like to attend. This will be for day passes to the Blue Zone. My officials are working to collate all requests and accommodate them as best we can. However, overall allocations will depend in part on the final set of COVID mitigation measures in place. The outcome of the expressions of interest registered will be shared with applicants in due course. We will write to the committee shortly to set out MP's access to COP26 and the details of the UK delegation.

Country and Sectoral Race to Zero

The UK Presidency is working to secure Race to Zero commitments from businesses around the world. Together with the High Level Champion, Nigel Topping, the UK Presidency works through the COP26 Regional Ambassadors and FCDO Diplomatic Network to help secure Race to Zero commitments from overseas private sector businesses.

In collaboration with the High Level Champion, the UK Presidency has secured 3,067 businesses signing up to the Race to Zero, spanning across 80 countries. This is a country increase of 70% since the UK assumed the COP Presidency. Under the UK Presidency, we have also seen a growing number of businesses sign up to Race to Zero from a range of sectors, including construction, cement, energy utilities, metals and vehicle manufacturing.

UK SME Race to Zero

As the UK's Net Zero Business Champion, Andrew Griffith's role is to support this Government's efforts to mobilise the business and investment community and to showcase UK businesses as global leaders in tackling climate change in this important period leading up to COP26 in November. By November, the aim is for as many UK small businesses as possible to join the 'Race to Zero'. Over 1500 small businesses have already signed up to the SME Climate Commitment and joined the Race to Zero.

In order to facilitate businesses tackling climate change, our new [digital platform](#) seeks to educate and inform businesses on what steps they can take to make a difference through the globally recognised small business climate commitment. The new digital platform is on the existing SME Climate Hub, which is part of the global Race to Zero campaign. It provides a UK focus to an otherwise high level, international campaign.

The Net Zero Business Champion acts as a point of contact for UK businesses, business owners and investors and business groups on net zero, listening to their questions, challenges and expectations; recognising their efforts and demonstrating

that they are valued; and creating an overview of how UK businesses are demonstrating leadership.

The Legacy of COP

The role of the Net Zero Business Champion during COP26 and the future of the role following the event is still being developed. The legacy of the Net Zero Business Champion is to raise awareness of climate change and encourage action among UK businesses, including SMEs. This will remain a key priority for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy beyond COP26.

Principal Partner Contribution

As part of their sponsorship, our Principal Partners will be involved in helping to share best practices and expertise, and help to communicate and encourage action within the UK and internationally in the run up to and at COP26. Our sponsors are making financial and/or Value in Kind contributions. For example, Reckitt Benckiser are supporting the UK Presidency to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 at COP26, by providing advice and scientific expertise on hygiene measures, and supplying Dettol products to help prevent spread of viruses and bacteria.

We ask all of our Principal Partners to support COP26 through their own communications activity, using the COP26 brand in their sustainability messaging and to support our campaigns in order to build awareness of COP26. Our Principal Partners receive some branding rights and support from the COP Unit in doing so.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alok' followed by a stylized flourish.

The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
COP President Designate