

Just Transition declaration adopted at COP26

Fourteen governments and the European Commission have adopted an ambitious Just Transition pledge which will provide the framework for an equitable transition to a climate resilient future.

The [Declaration](#) was signed by countries in the Global North with the economic weight to make it a reality, including the US, Canada, UK, the European Commission and a number of individual European countries. Wealthy countries have pledged funding for climate change mitigation and decarbonization efforts in poorer countries, and this funding will now be subject to the Just Transition principles.

They will also apply the principles of the Declaration in their domestic Just Transition plans.

The text of the declaration was prepared in close collaboration between the UK government's Just Transition lead, the ITUC, IndustriALL Global Union and IndustriAll Europe.

The Declaration builds on the Paris Agreement, the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Guidelines for a Just Transition, and the Silesia Declaration that was adapted at COP24 in Katowice, Poland.

It recognizes that the effects of climate change and of decarbonizing the economy will fall disproportionately on those in poverty or insecure work, those in carbon-intensive industries, and those in fossil-fuel dependent countries, and that it risks exacerbating gender, racial, age and other inequalities. It aims to ensure that no one is left behind as the world transitions to a climate-friendly economy.

The principles of the Declaration are:

- Support for workers in the transition to new jobs
- Support and promotion of social dialogue and stakeholder engagement
- Economic strategies leading to sustainable development, including support for fossil-fuel dependent countries to diversify their economies
- The creation of local, inclusive, and decent work, so that new green jobs are not outsourced
- Just Transition principles must be applied throughout the supply chain, using recognized due diligence standards
- A commitment to reporting Just Transition progress in the framework of the Paris Agreement and the National Determined Contributions.

IndustriALL Assistant General Secretary Kemal Özkan said:

“All the parties are talking about Just Transition at this COP. This is alone huge victory for us, and it shows our interventions have broken through. But there has always been a struggle over definitions, to make sure we are talking about the same thing. There has also been a lack of detail about how Just Transition will be carried out in practice.

“This Declaration sets a very important precedent. Unions in every country should disseminate it widely and ensure that their governments, companies and other stakeholders understand its contents, and lobby hard to ensure that these principles, as well as the ILO Guidelines, are adhered to.”

IndustriALL Europe Deputy General Secretary, Judith Kirton-Darling added:

“We are not simply talking about another declaration. We are talking about clear commitments by governments to effective social dialogue with workers and about governments accepting responsibility and accountability for the implementation of Just Transition principles within the reporting process of the Paris Agreement. Unions have high expectations towards these governments and request to be fully involved.”

The Declaration follows intensive lobbying by the labour movement over many years. Last week, IndustriALL Global and industriAll Europe launched a [joint declaration](#), calling on governments to go beyond nice words on paper and implement a Just Transition with concrete measures and in respect of social dialogue and workers’ participation.

At COP26 this week, unions held a number of side events to promote Just Transition initiatives. At Energy Day on 4 November, the parties announced a decarbonization partnership worth \$8.5 billion for the South African energy sector that was [cautiously welcomed](#) by unions. Unions will watch developments in South Africa closely, as it provides a good test case for a large scale, international Just Transition process.

IndustriALL Global and industriAll Europe are looking forward to discussing Just Transition further at their joint side event in the EU Pavilion on coming up on Wednesday, 10 November with unions, employers, politicians and the European Commission.