



Union of European Federalists  
Union Europäischer Föderalisten  
Union des Fédéralistes Européens

Paris, November 19, 2021

## COP26: for a global democracy able to face the climate emergency

The 26th International Climate Conference (COP26) ended in Glasgow with many promises and a lack of concrete commitments, but with an awareness of the climate emergency by all participating countries.

The agreement was changed at the last minute due to pressure from India and China, which - supported by other coal-dependent developing countries - rejected the phase-out of coal-fired power. However, after intense negotiations between representatives of China, India, the United States and the European Union, the text was amended to require countries to "phase down" their use of coal.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which is open to all UN member countries, had published its latest assessment [report](#). It shows "unequivocally" that human influence is the main factor in the warming that is already having concrete impacts on our environment. Above all, the report warns that over the next few decades, climate change will increase everywhere on the planet ([see the interactive Atlas](#)).

However, it is possible to mitigate rising sea levels or the intensification of heat waves by limiting warming, with "an immediate, rapid and large-scale reduction in greenhouse gas emissions" according to Valérie Masson-Delmotte, co-chair of IPCC Group 1. The urgency to act on a global scale to try to reverse the curve is now evident.

However, in order to find solutions, we are still relying on confrontation between diplomats, in other words, between divergent national interests. The insufficient progress made at COP 26, as at previous COPs, clearly shows the limits of the current institutional system. The main concern of each national leader is to impose their geopolitical vision in the short term and the least constraint and cost to their electorate, and not to solve in the long term a global challenge that concerns all the citizens of the planet, and that will cost them in the end very heavily, humanly, socially and financially.

Intergovernmental decision-making processes such as the COPs are supposed to provide the solution to global environmental problems, but they do not allow for the monitoring of the respect of commitments, nor for the sanctioning of states that do not respect their commitments. In the absence of a true global democracy with the popular legitimacy to impose decisions and make them binding, States will always be tempted to not respect their commitments.

Federalists have been committed to climate change since the Rio Summit in 1992 and therefore support initiatives for institutional reform of global governance. We believe that the citizens of the world have the right to express their sovereignty and to directly influence their destiny. Internal struggles between states can no longer influence our future.

We therefore support the creation of a World Court for the Environment where international law is above national laws and applies universally. This Court would ensure that the will of the people, as expressed by the citizens concerned, that is, all of humanity, is respected.

Federalists also support the creation of a United Nations parliamentary assembly, which would be the voice of citizens through their representatives, alongside the general assembly representing states. The international judicial system would thus have the democratic legitimacy to compel states to respect the agreements and conventions that are binding on members of the United Nations.

In the light of the climate emergency, federalists will be particularly watchful and committed when the international summit that is supposed to propose democratic changes to the United Nations system opens in 2023.

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