

BRIEFING ROOM

Remarks by President Biden at the Virtual Leaders Summit on Climate Opening Session

APRIL 22, 2021 • SPEECHES AND REMARKS

East Room

8:07 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Madam Vice President.

Good morning to all of our colleagues around the world — the world leaders who are taking part in this summit. I thank you. You know, your leadership on this issue is a statement to the people of your nation and to the people of every nation, especially our young people, that we’ re ready

to meet this moment. And meeting this moment is about more than preserving our planet; it's also about providing a better future for all of us.

That's why, when people talk about climate, I think jobs. Within our climate response lies an extraordinary engine of job creation and economic opportunity ready to be fired up. That's why I've proposed a huge investment in American infrastructure and American innovation to tap the economic opportunity that climate change presents our workers and our communities, especially those too often that have — left out and left behind.

I'd like to build — I want to build a — a critical infrastructure to produce and deploy clean technology — both those we can harness today and those that we'll invent tomorrow.

I talked to the experts, and I see the potential for a more prosperous and equitable future. The signs are unmistakable. The science is undeniable.

But the cost of inaction is — keeps mounting.

The United States isn't waiting. We are resolving to take action — not only the — our federal government, but our cities and our states all across our country; small businesses, large businesses, large corporations; American workers in every field.

I see an opportunity to create millions of good-paying, middle-class, union jobs.

I see line workers laying thousands of miles of transmission lines for a clean, modern, resilient grid.

I see workers capping hundreds of thousands of abandoned oil and gas wells that need to be cleaned up, and abandoned coalmines that need to be reclaimed, putting a stop to the methane leaks and protecting the health of our communities.

I see autoworkers building the next generation of electric vehicles, and electricians installing nationwide for 500,000 charging stations along our highways.

I see engine- — the engineers and the construction workers building new carbon capture and green hydrogen plants to forge cleaner steel and cement and produce clean power.

I see farmers deploying cutting-edge tools to make soil of our — of our Heartland the next frontier in carbon innovation.

By maintaining those investments and putting these people to work, the United States sets out on the road to cut greenhouse gases in half — in half by the end of this decade. That's where we're headed as a nation, and that's what we can do if we take action to build an economy that's not only more prosperous, but healthier, fairer, and cleaner for the entire planet.

You know, these steps will set America on a path of net-zero emissions economy by no later than 2050. But the truth is, America represents less than 15 percent of the world's emissions. No nation can solve this crisis on our own, as I know you all fully understand. All of us, all of us — and particularly those of us who represent the world's largest economies — we have to step up.

You know, those that do take action and make bold investments in their people and clean energy future will win the good jobs of tomorrow, and make their economies more resilient and more competitive.

So let's run that race; win more — win more sustainable future than we have now; overcome the existential crisis of our times. We know just how critically important that is because scientists tell us that this is the decisive decade. This is the decade we must make decisions that will avoid the worst consequences of a climate crisis. We must try to keep the Earth's temperature and — to an increase of — to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

You know, the world beyond 1.5 degrees means more frequent and intense fires, floods, droughts, heat waves, and hurricanes tearing through communities, ripping away lives and livelihoods, increasingly dire impacts to our public health.

It's undeniable and undeni- — you know, the idea of accelerating and the reality that will come if we don't move. We can't resign ourselves to that future. We have to take action, all of us.

And this summit is our first step on the road we'll travel together — God willing, all of us — to and through Glasgow this November and the U.N. Climate Conference — the Climate Change Conference, you know, to set our world on a path to a secure, prosperous, and sustainable future. The health of communities throughout the world depends on it. The wellbeing of our workers depends on it. The strength of our economies depends on it.

The countries that take decisive action now to create the industries of the future will be the ones that reap the economic benefits of the clean energy boom that's coming.

You know, we're here at this summit to discuss how each of us, each country, can set higher climate ambitions that will in turn create good-paying jobs, advance innovative technologies, and help vulnerable countries adapt to climate impacts.

We have to move. We have to move quickly to meet these challenges. The steps our countries take between now and Glasgow will set the world up for success to protect livelihoods around the world and keep global warming at a maximum of 1.5 degrees Celsius. We must get on the path now in order to do that.

If we do, we'll breathe easier, literally and figuratively; we'll create good jobs here at home for millions of Americans; and lay a strong foundation for growth for the future. And — and that — that can be your goal as well.

This is a moral imperative, an economic imperative, a moment of peril but also a moment of extraordinary possibilities.

Time is short, but I believe we can do this. And I believe that we will do this.

Thank you for being part of the summit. Thank you for the communities that you — and the commitments you have made, the communities you're from. God bless you all.

And I look forward to progress that we can make together today and beyond. We really have no choice. We have to get this done.

8:14 A.M. EDT

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/04/22/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-virtual-leaders-summit-on-climate-opening-session/>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/04/22/remarks-by-vice-president-harris-at-the-virtual-leaders-summit-on-climate-opening-session/>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/04/22/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-virtual-leaders-summit-on-climate-session-2-investing-in-climate-solutions/>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/26/president-biden-invites-40-world-leaders-to-leaders-summit-on-climate/>

Speech 22 April 2021 Brussels

Speech by President von der Leyen at the Global Leaders Summit hosted by U.S President Joe Biden on the occasion of Earth Day

Thank you very much, dear President Biden,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A little over five years ago, the world came together to sign the Paris Agreement. Today, we have to strengthen that global unity around ambitious new goals. Because this will be the 'make or break' decade for our climate. Therefore, I want to thank President Biden for convening this meeting on Earth Day.

The Paris Agreement is humanity's life insurance. At the COP26 in Glasgow, we must show that we all have understood this and that we are ready for more climate action. Because we are getting dangerously close to 1.5 degrees of global warming. Science tells us it is not too late yet, but we must hurry up.

This is what Europe is doing. 11 days after taking office, my Commission launched the European Green Deal for transforming our economy. Yesterday, we agreed Europe's first ever Climate Law with the European Parliament and our 27 governments, as Angela Merkel mentioned. With this, we write into stone the goal set out by the European Green Deal – to make Europe climate-neutral by 2050.

We also have agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030. In June, my Commission will table proposals to make Europe 'Fit for 55'. We will make emission trading work – not only for energy generation and

industry – but also for transport and for buildings. Carbon must have its price – because nature cannot pay the price any longer.

But ‘Fit for 55’ is not just about emissions. We will safeguard our nature and enhance biodiversity, going for nature-based solutions wherever possible. And we will ensure that all this is done in a just and inclusive way. Because for our ambition to succeed, we must leave nobody behind.

Climate action is also a massive opportunity for our economies. It creates new markets. It mobilises investment in new and transforming industries, and it unleashes innovation for a healthier and more prosperous future. This is why 30% of Europe's Recovery Plan – NextGenerationEU, Mario Draghi mentioned it – , altogether EUR 1.8 trillion, is earmarked for climate-related goals.

The fight against climate change will be the engine for our global recovery. And it will be our compass for cooperation with all of you in many areas. In research, innovation and breakthrough technologies through forums like Mission Innovation. Or in helping vulnerable countries to become resilient to climate change.

Europe wants to be the first climate-neutral continent in the world. But to save the climate, we need the world. We need all major economies to take their responsibility and to turn the transition into an opportunity for all. Let us set together a new global benchmark for climate neutrality. Let us work together on a shared commitment and joint action for reducing emissions by 2030. This puts us on a pathway to net-zero emissions by 2050. That is what our planet needs.

Thank you again, President Biden, for this meeting. It is so good to have the U.S. back on our side in the fight against climate change. Together, we can go faster and get further. Together, we will win the future.

Thanks a lot.

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_21_1882

"Green finance" - Speech by President Charles Michel at the Leaders' Climate Summit

Dear President Biden,

Thank you for convening this important summit. America is back with us at the forefront of multilateralism. And your decision to return to the Paris Agreement sends a strong global signal. This is good news for the world.

We face a civilisational challenge. Human beings have always shown a unique ability to adapt. Adapting from agrarian communities to industrial nations, dependent on fossil fuels.

Today we understand this is not sustainable. And we must once again adapt, to fossil-free economies. This is now the third industrial revolution.

In December 2019, EU Leaders committed to climate neutrality by 2050. We were the first major economy to take such a bold decision. And just yesterday, we enshrined our ambitious climate goals into European Climate Law. In three minutes I'd like to focus on two critical areas: green bonds and carbon pricing.

Green Finance

First, we need to be more determined in the field of climate finance. We decided collectively to mobilise at least 100 billion dollars a year, for climate financing.

The EU and our Member States remain the largest contributor of public climate finance to developing countries. We urge all developed countries to scale up their contributions. This would send a strong signal in the run up to COP 26.

This is why our EU budget and recovery package will dedicate around 600 billion euros to powering our green transition. Transition to a low carbon economy requires massive investment, which far exceeds public investment capacity alone.

We need to use our public funding intelligently — to create buy-in from the private sector. The green transition is our prosperity strategy.

Green bonds

30% of our recovery package will be funded through green bonds. Since finance is global, green finance must also be global. We want to cooperate and orientate the private sector.

Green finance was born in Europe. And today, our currency — the euro — is by far the leading currency when it comes to green bonds. We have the most advanced regulatory framework in the world. We will soon establish a European Green Bond Standard. But we need to create the right global regulatory framework. Let's provide greater certainty for private investors, everywhere in the world.

In 2019, we set up the International Platform on Sustainable Finance. Today, the Platform represents 55% of global greenhouse gas emissions. And we encourage more countries to join. Our European ambition is also reflected in our EU financial institutions.

As of this year, the European Investment Bank has aligned all its financing activities with the goals of the Paris agreement. It will dedicate at least 50% of annual financing to green investment by 2025. It will support 1 trillion euro in investment for green projects, this decade. And the European Central Bank is also working on the implication of climate change for monetary policy and financial stability.

Carbon Pricing

My second point, a global approach to carbon pricing is paramount to promoting green investment. If we want to be at peace with nature, we need to chase carbon from our business model. This is the only way to change direction.

Preserving a global level playing field is essential. We must set the right incentives at the global level. Because carbon leakage across our economies is detrimental.

That's why we intend to introduce a carbon border adjustment mechanism. This is needed to ensure a level playing field. And it must be compatible with WTO rules. We are ready to work with all our partners on carbon pricing.

We want to be a strong and loyal partner. And we are ready. Ready to join forces with all global partners. Ready to take our collective responsibility for the well-being of our people and of our planet. Thank you.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/04/22/green-finance-speech-by-president-charles-michel-at-the-leaders-climate-summit/>

Leaders Summit on Climate

Vladimir Putin took part, via videoconference, in the Leaders Summit on Climate. Organised by the United States, the event is being held on April 22 – 23.

April 22, 2021 16:10 The Kremlin, Moscow

The President of Russia put forth Russia's position regarding the development of broad international cooperation aimed at mitigating the negative consequences of global climate change.

On the Russian side, the summit was also attended by Minister of Natural Resources and Environment [Alexander Kozlov](#) and Adviser to the President and Special Presidential Representative on Climate Issues [Ruslan Edelgeriyev](#).

Speech at the Leaders Summit on Climate

President of Russia Vladimir Putin:

Mr President,

Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Our discussion today has demonstrated our deep mutual

concern over climate change and our interest in stepping up international efforts to resolve this problem. The success of our efforts will largely determine the future of the entire planet, the development prospects of every country, people's welfare and their quality of life.

We believe that the universal agreements reached at the UN provide a reliable legal framework for the joint efforts of states to control and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I would like to point out that Russia is scrupulously implementing its

international commitments in this sphere. This concerns, first of all, the implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. We have been working energetically to formulate modern legislation to ensure reliable control over carbon emissions and to stimulate their reduction.

Yesterday I delivered my annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, and one of the top priority tasks I have set in terms of socioeconomic development was to substantially

limit cumulative emissions in our country by 2050.

I am sure that this task is feasible despite Russia's size, its geographical, climatic and structural peculiarities. Let me recall that compared to 1990, Russia has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions more than many other countries. These emissions were cut in half – from 3.1 billion to 1.6 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. This was a result of the fundamental restructuring of Russian industry and energy over the past 20 years.

As a result, now 45 percent of our energy balance comes from

low-emission energy sources, including nuclear power. It is common knowledge that nuclear power plants produce almost zero greenhouse gas emissions throughout their life cycle.

We intend to continue increasing the scale of associated gas utilisation. We will also continue implementing our large-scale programme for ecological modernisation and higher energy efficiency in all economic sectors. We will ensure the capture, storage and use of carbon dioxide from all sources and create the infrastructure for producing

hydrogen as both a raw material and a source of energy.

I would like to mention in this context that Russia's Sakhalin Region has launched a pilot project to create a carbon pricing and trading system. This project will allow this Russian region to reach carbon neutrality by 2025.

Obviously, the situation that provoked the global warming and related problems emerged a long time ago. What do we think about comprehensive solutions to these problems?

First. Carbon dioxide has been in the atmosphere for hundreds of years. Therefore, it is not enough to talk just about new amounts of emissions. It is important to absorb the carbon dioxide that has already accumulated in the atmosphere. It is no exaggeration to say that Russia is making an enormous contribution to the absorption of global emissions, both our own and those of others, owing to the absorbing capacity of our ecosystems, which is estimated at 2.5 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent a year.

Second, we must take into account absolutely every cause of global warming. For example, methane accounts for 20 percent of anthropogenic emissions. The greenhouse effect of each tonne of methane is 25 – 28 times greater than a tonne of CO_2 . Experts believe that if we could halve methane emissions in the next 30 years, global temperatures would decrease by 0.18 degrees by 2050. The difference between this figure and the target set in the Paris Agreement is about 45 percent.

In this context, it would be extremely important to develop broad and effective international cooperation in the calculation and monitoring of all polluting emissions into the atmosphere.

We urge all interested countries to take part in joint research, to invest in climate projects that can have a practical effect and to redouble efforts to create low-carbon technologies to mitigate the consequences and adjust to climate change.

Third, I have no doubt that climate efforts should, of course, rally the efforts of the entire international

community. Russia is willing to propose a number of joint projects and discuss possible incentives for foreign companies that would like to invest in clean technology, including in our country.

And lastly, global development should not just be green but also sustainable in the full meaning of the word – and for all countries without exception. And consequently, it should be closely connected with progress in such high-priority areas as efforts against poverty and closing development gaps.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise once again that the Russian Federation is genuinely interested in stepping up international cooperation so that we can continue to search for effective solutions to climate change, as well as other acute global problems. In fact, this should be the goal of the current video summit.

Thank you for your attention.

<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/65425>

China 22:45, 22-Apr-2021

Full text: Xi Jinping's speech at Leaders Summit on Climate

CGTN

Chinese President Xi Jinping [delivered a speech](#) titled "For Man and Nature: Building a Community of Life Together" at the Leaders Summit on Climate via video link from Beijing on Thursday.

Below is the full text:

Honorable President Joe Biden,

Honorable Colleagues,

It is a great pleasure to join you at the Leaders Summit on Climate on Earth Day. I wish to thank President Biden for the kind invitation. It is good to have this opportunity to have an in-depth exchange of views with you on

climate change, and to discuss ways to tackle this challenge and find a path forward for man and Nature to live in harmony.

Since time of the industrial civilization, mankind has created massive material wealth. Yet, it has come at a cost of intensified exploitation of natural resources, which disrupted the balance in the Earth's ecosystem, and laid bare the growing tensions in the human-Nature relationship. In recent years, climate change, biodiversity loss, worsening desertification and frequent extreme weather events have all posed severe challenges to human survival and development. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has added difficulty to economic and social development across countries. Faced with unprecedented challenges in global environmental governance, the international community needs to come up with unprecedented ambition and action. We need to act with a sense of responsibility and unity, and work together to foster a community of life for man and Nature.

- **We must be committed to harmony between man and Nature.** "All things that grow live in harmony and benefit from the nourishment of Nature." Mother Nature is the cradle of all living beings, including humans. It provides everything essential for humanity to survive and thrive. Mother Nature has nourished us, and we must treat Nature as our root, respect it, protect it, and follow its laws. Failure to respect Nature or follow its laws will only invite its revenge. Systemic spoil of Nature will take away the foundation of human survival and development, and will leave us human beings like a river without a source and a tree without its roots. We should protect Nature and preserve the environment like we protect our eyes, and endeavor to foster a new relationship where man and Nature can both prosper and live in harmony.

- **We must be committed to green development. Green mountains are gold mountains.** To protect the environment is to protect productivity, and to improve the environment is to boost productivity — the truth is as simple as that. We must abandon development models that harm or undermine the environment, and must say no to shortsighted approaches

of going after near-term development gains at the expense of the environment. Much to the contrary, we need to ride the trend of technological revolution and industrial transformation, seize the enormous opportunity in green transition, and let the power of innovation drive us to upgrade our economic, energy and industrial structures, and make sure that a sound environment is there to buttress sustainable economic and social development worldwide.

- **We must be committed to systemic governance.** Mountains, rivers, forests as well as farmlands, lakes, grasslands and deserts all make indivisible parts of the ecosystem. Protecting the ecosystem requires more than a simplistic, palliative approach. We need to follow the innate laws of the ecosystem and properly balance all elements and aspects of Nature. This is a way that may take us where we want to be, an ecosystem in sound circulation and overall balance.

- **We must be committed to a people-centered approach.** The environment concerns the well-being of people in all countries. We need to take into full account people's longing for a better life and a good environment as well as our responsibility for future generations. We need to look for ways to protect the environment, grow the economy, create jobs and remove poverty all at the same time, so as to deliver social equity and justice in the course of green transition and increase people's sense of benefit, happiness and security.

- **We must be committed to multilateralism.** We need to work on the basis of international law, follow the principle of equity and justice, and focus on effective actions. We need to uphold the UN-centered international system, comply with the objectives and principles laid out in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement, and strive to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We need to each take stronger actions, strengthen partnerships and cooperation, learn from each other and make common progress in the new journey toward global carbon neutrality. In this

process, we must join hands, not point fingers at each other; we must maintain continuity, not reverse course easily; and we must honor commitments, not go back on promises.

China welcomes the United States' return to the multilateral climate governance process. Not long ago, the Chinese and U.S. sides released a Joint Statement Addressing the Climate Crisis. China looks forward to working with the international community including the United States to jointly advance global environmental governance.

- **We must be committed to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.** The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the cornerstone of global climate governance. Developing countries now face multiple challenges to combat COVID-19, grow the economy, and address climate change. We need to give full recognition to developing countries' contribution to climate action and accommodate their particular difficulties and concerns. Developed countries need to increase climate ambition and action. At the

same time, they need to make concrete efforts to help developing countries strengthen the capacity and resilience against climate change, support them in financing, technology, and capacity building, and refrain from creating green trade barriers, so as to help developing countries accelerate the transition to green and low-carbon development.

Colleagues,

The Chinese civilization has always valued harmony between man and Nature as well as observance of the laws of Nature. It has been our constant pursuit that man and Nature could live in harmony with each other. Ecological advancement and conservation have been written into China's Constitution and incorporated into China's overall plan for building socialism with Chinese characteristics. China will follow the Thought on Ecological Civilization and implement the new development philosophy. We will aim to achieve greener economic and social development in all aspects, with a special focus on developing green and low-carbon energy. We will continue to prioritize ecological conservation and pursue a green

and low-carbon path to development.

Last year, I made the official announcement that China will strive to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. This major strategic decision is made based on our sense of responsibility to build a community with a shared future for mankind and our own need to secure sustainable development. China has committed to move from carbon peak to carbon neutrality in a much shorter time span than what might take many developed countries, and that requires extraordinarily hard efforts from China. The targets of carbon peak and carbon neutrality have been added to China's overall plan for ecological conservation. We are now making an action plan and are already taking strong nationwide actions toward carbon peak. Support is being given to peaking pioneers from localities, sectors and companies. China will strictly control coal-fired power generation projects, and strictly limit the increase in coal consumption over the 14th Five-Year Plan period and phase it down in the 15th Five-Year Plan period. Moreover, China has decided to accept the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and tighten regulations

over non-carbon dioxide emissions. China's national carbon market will also start trading.

As a participant, contributor and trailblazer in global ecological conservation, China is firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action and promoting a fair and equitable system of global environmental governance for win-win cooperation. China will host COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity this October and looks forward to working with all parties to enhance global governance on biodiversity. We support COP26 to the UNFCCC in achieving positive outcomes. As we in China often say, "It is more important to show people how to fish than just giving them fish." China has done its best to help developing countries build capacity against climate change through various forms of results-oriented South-South cooperation. From remote sensing satellites for climate monitoring in Africa to low-carbon demonstration zones in Southeast Asia and to energy-efficient lights in small island countries, such cooperation has yielded real, tangible and solid results. China has also made ecological cooperation a key part of Belt and Road cooperation. A

number of green action initiatives have been launched, covering wide-ranging efforts in green infrastructure, green energy, green transport and green finance, to bring enduring benefits to the people of all Belt and Road partner countries.

Colleagues,

As we say in China, "When people pull together, nothing is too heavy to be lifted." Climate change poses pressing, formidable and long-term challenges to us all. Yet I am confident that as long as we unite in our purposes and efforts and work together with solidarity and mutual assistance, we will rise above the global climate and environment challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.

Thank you.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-04-22/Full-text-Xi-Jinping-s-speech-at-Leaders-Summit-on-Climate-ZFUan11sc0/index.html>

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-04-25/A-consistent-pledge-China-fights-for-global-climate-justice-ZJSt3rWj96/index.html>