

Geneva Reporter

COP 26 – Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

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Quakers at the "Global Day of Action for Climate Justice" at COP 26 in Glasgow

Lindsey Fielder Cook, Representative for Climate Change writes:

QUNO's work at the Conference of Parties (COP) 26 in Glasgow began many months ago and included five quiet diplomacy meetings with climate negotiators, extensive talks, publications to empower government policymakers, climate advocates, and citizens, and support to Quaker organizations attending the COP. During the COP, QUNO made presentations both within COP and to the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Chatham House, and the People's Summit.

COP26 in Glasgow was 'two steps forward one step back'. Set during a global pandemic, it had several achievements to celebrate. Yet it was also a 'developed country' COP in both location and priority, ring-fencing major climate drivers systemic to wealthier countries, including oil and gas extraction and unsustainable economic systems and consumption.

Negotiators completed the Paris Agreement Implementation Rulebook, a significant achievement after three unsuccessful attempts and critical for trust in the Paris Agreement (PA). Guidelines for Carbon Market Mechanisms (Article 6), a form of 'offsetting' greenhouse gas emissions rather than reducing at source, were relatively robust though some concerns remain over double counting. The guidelines included important human rights and Indigenous Rights language, and an 'independent redress process', needed to help avoid abuses experienced in earlier 'offset' models. However, there was deep disappointment in the African Group, which sought better accountability in linking a percentage of carbon market proceeds to support adaptation.

Transparency guidelines will be the same for developed and developing countries, important for effective compliance, though there was controversy over different metrics being allowed in some incidences and allowance for some confidential 'provisions'. Common time frames for reporting, critical in influencing mitigation ambition, kept to the more effective 5 year time period, with a 'counting backward' approach that addressed some country concerns.

The final decision, the Glasgow Climate Pact, includes the first mention of 'fossil fuels' in a COP decision text, and action on fossil fuel subsidies (language weakened to 'inefficient'

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COP 26 (continued)

subsidies). There was strong grounding in climate science and holding to a 1.5C global temperature rise limit, recognizing suffering, loss of life, and ecosystem collapse predicted between a 1.5C and 2C temperature rise. The US-China Joint Declaration, announced in the second week, also helped pave decisive language for the COP decisions.

The COP proposed ways to accelerate nationally determined contributions (NDC) mitigation before 2030, which is critical since current NDCs are far from levels needed to avoid catastrophic temperature rise. Nor are NDCs all-encompassing - they do not include military emissions and count fossil fuel burning (user) rather than extraction (seller), thus hiding producer responsibility.

There were several 'declarations' offered, including reducing tropical deforestation, phasing down of coal (with financial support to South Africa to transition), and reducing methane release in fossil fuel production by 30% in 2030. In addition, weight was given to two approaches being embraced by fossil fuel interests - 'nature-based solutions', which range from natural regeneration to carbon off-setting, and carbon capture storage, which is unproven to scale, energy-intensive, and risks leakage.

These reflect developed country priorities; they require little mitigation leadership from wealthier, oil and gas extractive economies. India's last-minute protests were not surprising – the call to phase out coal, the poorer country's energy source, happened as US President Biden sought increases in oil production to reduce rising US gas prices, and Norwegians protested outside the COP over their country's failure to reduce oil and gas extraction.

Climate finance promised by developed countries 11 years ago, of \$100 billion per year by 2020, was not met in 2020, nor 2021, and there is no clear accountability mechanism for fair share contribution and delivery. Faced with this failure, leaders agreed on a climate finance delivery plan to reach \$100 billion by 2023 and \$120 billion by 2025. The adaptation fund received promises to be doubled, though this is from a relatively low baseline.

Loss and Damage was never a priority to this COP – that is, help from those most responsible for current climate change, to those most affected and least responsible. A COP decision promised a 'dialogue' in 2022. The lack of meaningful

action was a profound disappointment and came despite extraordinary efforts, including many faith voices and British Quaker advocacy leadership.

The engagement of civil society at this COP was remarkable, inspiring, and a hopeful sign for the future; our governments will be as ambitious as their people are engaged. The UK Presidency called this the 'most inclusive COP ever', yet the record number of COP badges came alongside an unprecedented restriction to observer access to the negotiation rooms, and a digital observation platform that continually crashed. The frustration, both in access and progress, resulted in a walkout of many observers on the last Friday, chanting for climate justice, and 'the people, united, will never be defeated'.

If people's voices continue to gain strength, we can build an example for future generations of acting responsibly when we know.

Joachim Monkelaan, Representative for Sustainable and Just Economic Systems adds:

Civil society banners at the COP advocated: "Systems change not climate change!" while Greta Thunberg declared COP26 a failure, saying that leaders don't want to change society. Instead, they talk about green growth within the current economic system. We agree that to avoid runaway global warming we must switch to clean energy, but we must also and above all radically change our consumption and production patterns. The narrative of green growth which underlies so many outcomes from COP26 sounds attractive but has never been demonstrated in reality. With the growth compulsion ingrained in capitalism, the question is: is it possible to organize a decline in production and consumption within capitalism? Another question is: why do we continue to consume more and more, while it is demonstrably not making us happier?

In other words, we need to look at the root causes of our outsized emissions if we want to win the marathon that climate action really is, including overconsumption and materialism. The "two steps forward, one step back" that COP26 represents are important in that marathon, but we need to address these root causes if we want to finish the marathon.

The International Migration Review Forum 2022: an opportunity to look back and move forward

Laurel Townhead and Marisa Leon Gomez Sonet

"Instead of repeating harmful narratives of fear and exclusion, it's time to welcome people into our communities, to reimagine our collective future" – Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

We are preparing for the first edition of the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) in May 2022, which will discuss the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) and new and continuing challenges related to migration. The IMRF will mark the tone and shape the agenda for multilateral discourse and UN action on migration for the next four years. We will work to ensure that reducing the human cost of current migration governance is at the core.

Our work to support the development of an ambitious, effective and human rights based GCM included a focus on implementation, follow up and review mechanisms, so we are pleased to see the first steps taken on the road to the IMRF. For our part, we are engaging with the UN Network on Migration, GCM Champion States, partner organizations, and other stakeholders for meaningful discussions leading to the IMRF. We wish to see an IMRF that will incentivize national action for human rights based migration policies and present a persuasive case for affected communities' participation in migration policy development and review. In line with this, our work focuses on the following substantive areas : ending lethal disregard (saving lives), ensuring protection (safe pathways for migration), dismantling systemic racism in migration governance, and advocating for a human rights-based approach to post-COVID migration governance.

As well as looking back at what has happened so far to implement the GCM the IMRF will be a space to move forward, through its progress declaration and through concrete commitments from States and others. We look forward to the release of the Secretary General's report on GCM implementation in February 2022 and to responding to and building on the priorities we hope this report will set out for the IMRF and multilateral dialogue and decision-making on migration governance. We encourage States to draw on the experience and expertise of migrants, NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions and other stakeholders as they prepare for the IMRF.

As part of this work, we are releasing a series of papers titled Migration Justice: Delivering on the Promise of the Global Compact for Migration. The first paper of this series outlines what the IMRF is and what will happen there. Please visit our page [here](#), available in English, Spanish, and French.

Peace and Disarmament Programme

Maya Street and Florence Foster

Our work on peace and disarmament (P&D) at the multilateral level is rooted in the understanding that sustainable peace is fundamentally linked with human rights, social and economic justice, and political participation.

We see the connections between the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Human Rights Council (HRC) as key. Indeed, as two forums that seek to address global issues – respectively from the 'Peace and Security' and 'Human Rights' pillars of the UN - there is potential for collaboration and joint learning. In our HRC48 statement we expressed regret that such opportunities have not yet been seized.

In the first week of November, QUNO facilitated an event at the Geneva Peace Week (GPW) on 'Sustaining Peace and Human Rights – making it work at the country level through engaging UN Special Procedures', looking at how this HRC mechanism can contribute to sustaining peace. We heard from special rapporteurs and other experts who shared their experiences of how special procedures, through their independence as experts, have the timely ability to identify emerging human rights issues through their public statements, country visits, urgent appeals and communications. They also have the potential to reach a variety of national stakeholders – including peacebuilders and others at the front line of protection, but crucially also with State actors.

These initiatives support the wider work of the P&D programme to strengthen ties between New York and Geneva and address cross-cutting issues by enhancing collaboration across all pillars of the UN system to sustain peace.

As we look to the next steps, we also continue to support collaboration and complementarity between human rights, business, and peace & security actors, towards ensuring corporate accountability and their responsibility to do no harm.

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Peace and Disarmament (continued)

To this end, we look forward to our continued engagement to support the Business and Human Rights Working Group in their development and implementation of a guidance note, that seeks to outline the relevance and applicability to the defence sector of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Similarly, our work on business actors' responsibilities to consider both conflict sensitivity and human rights based approaches in their engagement in

fragile contexts fed into the White Paper on the Future of Environmental Peacebuilding. This paper will be published at the 2nd Environmental Peacebuilding Conference in 2022. QUNO will also host a roundtable on securitization, human rights and COP26 together organised by the Climate Change and Peace & Disarmament programmes at QUNO and in collaboration with QCEA at the conference.

News in brief

QUNO Geneva celebrates the arrival of Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge on 11 November 2021 as incoming Director. Nozizwe brings a wealth of experience as a leader, working inside and outside of government structures and as a life-long campaigner for human rights and justice. QUNO Geneva's governing Committee mandated a handover period with outgoing Director Jonathan Woolley who will retire on 31 December 2021 after ten-and-a-half years' service. Nozizwe and Jonathan have been working together since October, alongside staff and institutional partners, to share know-how and ideas, and to ensure a seamless leadership transition.

We express our appreciation to Stephen Schenck who has coordinated our Communications effort since 2014 in different part-time roles and to Joachim Monkelbaan who has led our pilot programme on Sustainable and Just Economic Systems since 2019. Both are leaving us to focus on new professional opportunities; both have offered to provide advice to QUNO about these ongoing programmes. We are grateful for all their personal and professional contributions to our team.

A new team of program assistants joined QUNO in September. We welcomed Maya, Marisa and Andres! See their impressive bios [here](#).

Nozizwe and Jonathan enjoying a conversation



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Visit quno.org/donate and help us continue working to promote peace and justice at the UN and other institutions.

Quaker United Nations Virtual Summer School

Are you 20-26 years old with a keen interest in the United Nations and would like to learn more on peace, disarmament, human rights, migration, sustainable and just economic systems, and climate change?

Join other young people in finding out about Quaker work at the international level and develop knowledge and competencies relevant to the work of the United Nations. Spend 10 days together on a virtual programme that will equip you with the skills to think constructively about the value of the multilateral system and international politics.

Due to the continuing Covid-19 situation, QUNO will offer its Quaker United Nations Summer School online in 2022 following this successful format in 2020 and 2021. Please check our website during January for up to date information about course dates and application procedure.



Recent publications

What is the International Migration Review Forum? <https://quno.org/resource/2021/10/what-international-migration-review-forum>

New Opportunities to Further Action on Racial Justice and Migration Justice <https://quno.org/resource/2021/9/new-opportunities-further-action-racial-justice-and-migration-governance>

Quaker United Nations Office
October 2021



Migration Justice: Delivering on the Promise of the Global Compact for Migration

Paper 1: What is the International Migration Review Forum?

General Overview

The International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) was created by the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). It is a Member State forum, with the participation of stakeholders, to discuss implementation of the GCM. The IMRF will be convened every four years starting in 2022. The first IMRF is expected to take place in May 2022 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York for three days.

The IMRF will be convened under the auspices of the General Assembly and be chaired by the President of the General Assembly.

The IMRF will be held at the highest possible political level, including heads of State or Government. Representatives of non-governmental organizations, academic, scientific and knowledge-based institutions, foundations, think tanks, faith-based organizations, indigenous peoples, diaspora communities, national human rights institutions and other relevant stakeholders may attend and participate.

The President of the General Assembly will organize and provide over a one-day informal interactive multistakeholder hearing prior to the start of the IMRF. A rapporteur from civil society will be selected to give a summary of this hearing at the opening segment of the IMRF.

Quaker United Nations Office



New Opportunities to Further Action on Racial Justice and Migration Governance

September 2021
Najmeh Ali and Laurel Townhead



A Government Official's Toolkit: inspiring urgent climate action

<https://quno.org/resource/2021/10/government-officials-toolkit-2021-edition>

Environmental Goods and Services <https://quno.org/resource/2021/9/environmental-goods-and-services-working-paper-no-2-tess-series>

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A Government Official's Toolkit inspiring urgent climate action

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Global Warming of 1.5°C
Climate Change and Land
Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate

**ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS AND SERVICES:
QUESTIONS AND POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD IN THE TESS**

Working Paper No. 2 in Trade and Environmental Sustainability Series
Joachim Monkelssoen, Mahesh Sugathan and Andres Narango



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All publications are available at: quno.org/recent-publications.

QUNO Q&A with Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge



Welcome Nozizwe! At QUNO we are excited to have you as our new Director. We are at a crucial but difficult moment working during a global pandemic towards climate justice, human rights, peace, and sustainable economic systems. In summary, can you explain your vision for QUNO in the next years?

Born out of the upheavals of the 17th Century, the Quaker Movement has an amazing history of activism for fundamental social change, which is inspired by our spiritual insights. The Quaker testimonies have guided individual and collective action locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally. Drawing on this rich history, my vision is for QUNO to deepen its efforts at achieving resilience and financial sustainability, particularly in the face of the current challenge of a shrinking funding base, as a result of the global economic downturn caused by COVID. QUNO's track record of effective high level quiet diplomacy at the United Nations underlines the unique way in which Quakers bring together professionalism and spirituality in all engagements. My vision is for the deepening of work in action, bringing QUNO and the broader Quaker community closer. My vision is for QUNO to achieve greater inclusiveness and diversity, in all our communications, the composition of our staff and governance structures.

What do you think Quakers can bring in particular to this moment or, in other words, why a Quaker approach in particular is important at the UN?

The current and emerging global crises, such as the COVID 19 pandemic, climate change and ongoing threat to global peace and economic sustainability polarise society and know no boundaries. This demands that we continue to provide safe spaces for people to have difficult conversations. The Quaker approach, based on the values of equality, human rights, and justice, brings a crucial spiritual dimension to the work of diplomacy, providing space for active listening, deep reflection, empathy, and transformation.

You bring to QUNO such a rich experience as a lifetime activist and working for peace and justice in South Africa. What do you think are lessons that can be drawn from that context to the current U.N. context?

As an activist for peace and justice in the liberation struggle in South Africa and as a former leader in government, I have learned that freedom is a constant struggle and that every generation needs to play its part in advancing and defending it. The struggle to end Apartheid mobilised global social action and inspired my own activism for peace and justice. The lessons from that struggle are that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere", and that it takes local mobilization supported by international solidarity to overcome injustice. I am inspired by the conscious effort at QUNO to ensure that international policy is founded on human rights and justice for all.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the cries of "Black Lives Matter" went around the US and the world after the murder of George Floyd. How do you think we should continue to respond as a Quaker organization? How do

you think we can embody the concept of "not leaving anyone behind"?

I was in the US during the COVID 19 lockdown and was horrified by the visual images on our television screens of a police officer's casual and unfeeling brutal killing of George Floyd. I saw the Black Lives Matter campaign going global and inspiring Quaker action both locally in the United States of America and internationally. With the history of activism to end slavery, fighting for better working conditions and the right of women to vote, Quakers can contribute to ending the legacy of racism, slavery, white supremacy, sexism, land dispossession, economic injustice and gender oppression.

The Black Quaker Project founded by Dr. Harold (Hal) Weaver, an Alumnus Fellow at the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research at Harvard University is an example. Dr Weaver's activism and people-to-people, transnational cultural diplomacy shows that we can continue to respond individually and collectively to these issues. We all have a duty to play an active role in the struggles being waged around us for meaningful and lasting change. I agree with Sophie Bevan, who says: "As recent events in the USA continue to draw media scrutiny, our attention turns to ourselves. Black Lives Matter is no longer a black issue."

Is there anything else perhaps not covered by the questions above that you would like to share?

I am deeply moved by how QUNO embraces Quaker testimonies and processes in all its work. I want to ensure that this deepens so that ALL our work communicates a deeper understanding of the interconnected systems of oppression and exclusion. We need perspectives from the global South, not only in terms of how the global crises impact on people but more importantly, providing effective solutions.