

Faith and Science: Towards COP26 Press Conference

On Thursday 17 June at 11:30am (Rome time), a press conference took place in the Holy See Press Office, to launch the meeting: Faith and Science: Towards COP26.

His Excellency Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States, Her Excellency Sally Axworthy, British Ambassador to the Holy See, His Excellency Pietro Sebastiani, Ambassador of Italy to the Holy See, were in the panel of speakers.

Leaders of the world's largest religions and spiritual traditions and some leading scientists will be meeting in the Vatican and Rome on 04 October 2021, to set out their vision for tackling climate change.

Faith and Science: Towards COP26 meeting will aim to:

- Encourage governments to approach COP26 with ambition, including in regards to their National Determined Contributions to reach the Paris Agreement goals;
- Show how the faiths are leading the way by greening their own operations at central and local level, possibly with new commitments;
- Inspire individuals to take specific actions to slow global temperature rises.

The meeting has been informed by a series of virtual meetings at which faith leaders have shared their understanding of the responsibility for the planet and how they as faith leaders and scientists hope to contribute to the necessary change. Dr Hoesung Lee, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), [makes the case for climate action by faith leaders](#) (see Annex 1 or click the link to watch the video).

Sally Axworthy, British Ambassador to the Holy See, said:

“Climate change is not yet going in the right direction. Faith leaders played a key role in building momentum for COP21 in 2015 and they can make a similar contribution to COP26.”

“All the faiths and belief systems see nature as sacred, and our duty as being to protect the environment. The leaders have drawn on their own traditions to suggest solutions; the dialogue with the scientists has been creative – facts and values coming together.”

Pietro Sebastiani, Ambassador of Italy to the Holy See, commented:

“Faith and Science: towards COP26 is inspired by the desire to deepen, develop and compare the concern and care for environmental issues that unites the different religions and spiritual traditions and therefore offer an unprecedented impulse to COP26.”

“An opportunity also to promote a discussion on ecological issues related to those of social justice and reflection, in particular, on a development model that cannot continue to produce an unsustainable environmental cost and increase social and economic inequalities.”

More information:

- The meeting is being organised by the Embassies of the United Kingdom and Italy to the Holy See, together with the Holy See, in the framework of the British presidency in partnership with Italy of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP26).
- The Faith and Science: Towards COP26 meeting will take place after the preparatory COP26 events in Milan: the world Conference dedicated to young people ‘Youth4Climate: Driving Ambition’ and the Pre-COP26 (28 September to 2 October 2021).
- At the UN Summit COP26 in Glasgow (1-12 November 2021), world leaders will meet with the aim to agree how to tackle the urgent threat of global climate change. It will bring 197 parties together for twelve days of talks. A moment for every country, and every part of society, to embrace their responsibility to protect our planet.
- Faith leaders played a key role creating the conditions for the success of COP21 in 2015 and many of them have spoken out about the shared responsibility of people of faith to care for the whole of creation. Based on religious values, the approach will be positive and pragmatic, emphasising our common responsibility for stewardship of the earth, and determination to change in order to care for the earth for future generations.

Hashtag: #Faiths4COP26

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Annex 1