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Moving Composite D Workplace Action Post-COP26

From the previous debate we all understand that there is much more that needs to be done to address the climate change crisis. Governments need to step up and ensure that the Just Transition of our economy, not just jobs in the high carbon fossil fuel industries, but a Just Transition for our whole economy moves forward and moves forward at pace,

However I want to reflect on what happened in November

I was one of the few trade unionists from across the world to bee involved on the inside of that vast complex on the Clyde where COP26 took place. I was proud to be part of a global delegation of the ITUC.

I was very proud that the voice of the international working class, heard in the plenary sessions when all the governments of the world were in attendance, was a Scottish voice, as Roz Foyer spoke truth unto power. She was brilliant.

And the last voice of the global trade unions at COP, which decried the failure of world leaders to deliver a Glasgow Climate Pact that would meet the Paris targets was, if not quite a Scottish accent, was our Richard Hardy of our General Council and Prospect.

Scottish trade union voices were heard and our comrades from across the world were extremely pleased and impressed with the leadership that Roz, Richard and others were able to give to the international trade union movement at that time.

Of course the loudest voice was not inside the COP but outside. On the streets where 40,000 mostly young people marched on the Friday and 150,000 marched on the Saturday through the streets of Glasgow.

These mobilisations were built over months with Scottish trade union reps participating in and helping to lead the COP26 Coalition which pulled together not just the big demos but hundreds of events in the run up to and throughout the COP26 fortnight in Glasgow.

The COP26 Coalition is now transitioning into a genuine Climate Justice Coalition to keep the movement built together, going forward and strengthening the international links that were forged over the 2 years leading up to Glasgow.

And we, the trade unions, were on the marches too with one of the biggest trade union mobilisations we have seen for many years making our class demands known – for Climate Justice and Jobs – as part of a wider massive mobilisation of young people, indigenous people from across the world, climate campaigners, tree-huggers, human rights defenders, scientists, farmers, it was an international demo but it was predominately a Scottish, working class demonstration

Demanding climate justice, demanding jobs, but most of all demanding that we stop drilling and burning fossil fuels.

We will disagree on some aspects of how we will arrive at net-zero carbon – whether carbon capture or nuclear or hydrogen are realistic, affordable and safe technologies and whether the billions needed to deliver on any of these would be better spent now on renewables that can deliver results quicker and cheaper,

We can even argue over whether net-zero is the right target, since net-zero targets can be abused by corporations buying up huge tracts of land to offset their continued burning of fossil fuels

But the message we delivered and heard on the streets of Glasgow is that **we must stop burning fossil fuels.**

That means Stop Cambo and any other licenses to exploit new oil and gas resources.

We as a movement must embrace this message and recognise that the 150.000 in Glasgow expect us to continue to make sure their voices are heard.

So we need to take this into the governments in Edinburgh and London but we also need to take it into the workplaces with support for Environmental Reps and demanding climate change plans in public and private enterprises that include carbon audits, skills audits and trade union environment reps negotiating plans to d-carbonise our workplaces.

UNISON launched our report on de-carbonising the public sector – a huge user of fossil fuels for running hospitals and schools, large fleets of vehicles needed to provide services in the communities – and showed that we can de-carbonise public services over the course of the next 15 years but we need governments to invest, we estimate around £140 billion over that period.

The climate crisis isn’t going to go away and we must ensure that our voices demanding climate justice for all doesn’t go away.

The 150,000 voices in Glasgow must still be heard in trade unions, in workplaces and mobilisations

On our May Day marches we want to see the demands of climate justice being heard

On the demonstration in June that the tUC have called there will be a climate justice bloc just as there was a trade union bloc on the climate justice demo in Glasgow.

This is our future and the climate justice movement is our movement.

I move.