



PRESS RELEASE

UN Secretary-General to push business, investors, cities to walk the talk on net-zero pledges; Expert Group launched amid worsening climate crisis

New York, 31 March 2022: UN Secretary-General António Guterres today launched his Expert Group to develop stronger and clearer standards for net-zero emissions pledges by non-State entities - including businesses, investors, cities and regions - and speed up their implementation.

The launch of the *High-Level Expert Group on the Net-Zero Emissions Commitments of Non-State Entities* comes amid a worsening climate crisis and growing urgency for all commitments to be transparent, credible, backed by robust implementation plans, and converted into real emissions cuts as rapidly as possible.

“Despite growing pledges of climate action, global emissions are at an all-time high. They continue to rise. The latest science shows that climate disruption is causing havoc in every region -- right now. We are in a race against time to limit global heating to 1.5 degrees. And we are losing,” the Secretary-General said.

“Governments have the lion’s share of responsibility to achieve net-zero emissions by mid-century. Especially the G20. But we also urgently need every business, investor, city, state and region to walk the talk on their net-zero promises.”

“To avert a climate catastrophe, we need bold pledges matched by concrete action. Tougher net-zero standards and strengthened accountability around the implementation of these commitments can deliver real and immediate emissions cuts.”

The Expert Group’s recommendations for higher ambition and environmental integrity will address four areas:

- Current standards and definitions for setting net-zero targets;
- Credibility criteria used to assess the objectives, measurement and reporting of net-zero pledges;
- Processes for verification and accounting of progress towards net-zero commitments and reported decarbonization plans; and
- A roadmap to translate standards and criteria into international and national level regulations.

At the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26), the Secretary-General flagged a clear need for more credible and robust standards and criteria for measuring, analyzing and reporting net-zero emissions pledges by non-State entities. Today’s launch is a key step towards meeting that need.

The Expert Group will be gender-balanced and will consist of respected and independent experts, drawn from a diverse group of countries and regions. They will work in their personal capacity.



The Group will be chaired by Ms. Catherine McKenna, former Canadian Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

“The recent avalanche of net-zero pledges by businesses, investors, cities and regions will be vital to keep 1.5°C alive and to build towards a safe and healthy planet, but only if all pledges have transparent plans, robust near-term action, and are implemented in full,” Ms. McKenna said.

The Expert Group will make recommendations before the end of the year.

The Members of the Group are below and short biographies can be found in Appendix 1. Further members may be added in the period ahead.

Ms. Amanda Starbuck
Dr. Arunabha Ghosh
Mr. Bill Hare
Ms. Camila Escobar
Mr. Carlos Lopes
Ms. Catherine McKenna (Chair)
Mr. Günther Thallinger
Ms. Helena Viñes Fiestas
Ms. Jessica Omukuti
Mr. Joaquim Levy
Ms. Malango Mughogho
Ms. Mary Nichols
Ms. Kahori Miyake
Mr. Oumar Tatam Ly
Mr. Rod Carr
Mr. Zhou Xiaochuan

The Terms of Reference for the Group can be found in Appendix 2.

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