Jobs and health are key elements of new initiatives to be launched at Climate Action Summit to ensure people’s well-being during the transition to a green economy

New York, 23 September – New initiatives aimed at ensuring that the transition to a green economy benefits all people are to be launched today at the United Nations Secretary-General’s Climate Action Summit in New York, with an emphasis on actions that help people secure employment, improve health, and promote gender equality.

Multilateral, unilateral and private sector announcements are to be made to address the economic, environmental and social issues arising from the transition toward greater sustainability.

UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed called for speeding up the transition in key sectors from grey to green economies but said we need to “safeguard people from the impacts of climate change already being felt right now and help make sure that we leave no one behind – the transition must be ramped up now, and it must be fair to include everyone.”

Climate Action for Jobs
A coalition, co-led by Spain and Peru, with support of the ILO, WHO and other institutions, is to launch a series of initiatives with the goal of strengthening the work of countries towards job creation, social protection, skills development, and technology and knowledge transfer when taking climate action.

The “Climate Action for Jobs” initiative provides a roadmap for ensuring that people’s jobs and well-being are at the center of the transition to a carbon neutral economy. The initiative, which 50 countries have already joined, calls for the formulation of national plans for a just transition, creating decent work as well as green jobs, and sets out specific measures for inclusion in these plans.

Implementation of the initiative will be spearheaded by the ILO, with support from other partners in the Climate Action Summit’s Social and Political Drivers action area, including the B-Team, International Trade Union Federation, and the International Organization of Employers.

Climate change and public health
Summit participants also are to unveil a new Safe Air Initiative, calling on governments at the national, regional, state and city level to commit to achieving safe air quality and aligning their climate change and air pollution policies by 2030, backed up by commitments from financial institutions and funds. Forty-one countries that have joined the initiative to date along with 71 sub-national governments and 2 health finance organizations, including the Clean Air Fund which announced a US$50 million fund aligned to the initiatives’ objectives.

According to the WHO, each year air pollution causes 7 million premature deaths, costs the global economy an estimated US$5.11 trillion in welfare losses and kills 600,000 children. In the 15 countries
with the highest greenhouse gas emissions, the health impacts of air pollution are estimated to cost more than 4 percent of GDP.

**Climate action must ensure gender equality**

Another initiative to be launched at the Summit calls on governments to commit to implement gender-responsive climate change action plans, policies, and strategies and empowering women as leaders of climate action. So far, 45 countries have signed onto this initiative, showing that women are central to the fight against climate change.

**About the Climate Action Summit**

The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres is hosting the Climate Action Summit in New York ahead of the UN General Assembly. The Secretary-General called on all leaders – governments, the private sector, civil society, local authorities and other international organizations – to come with concrete, realistic plans that will boost ambition and rapidly accelerate action to implement the Paris Agreement.

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