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Holy See Statement on COP26

The Holy See Delegation has brought the concerns of Pope Francis for our common home before the participants of the COP26, emphasizing the human face of the climate crisis, its impact on the poorest and those who have done the least to cause it.

The ambitious commitments made by States to limit the rise of the global average temperature to 1.5 °C above preindustrial levels and to provide the needed financial resources to do so are promising and indeed essential for the survival of the most vulnerable communities.

The Holy See Delegation appreciates the commitments that States have made in their pledges. While there is more to be done, it is important to be proactive in finding effective ways to implement the pledges made.

During these two weeks, various "gaps" have emerged in the fields of mitigation, adaptation and financing. The resources made available for these three aspects, which are fundamental for achieving the objectives of the Paris Agreement, will need to be strengthened and renewed in order to achieve these goals. The Holy See hopes that COP26 can reach an agreement on a clear roadmap to close these gaps soon, with developed countries taking the lead.

The issue of loss and damage is particularly critical to those communities that are most vulnerable to climate change, as was also recognized in the joint appeal by faith leaders and scientists on 4th October. Pope Francis has clearly emphasized the ecological debt and the solidarity that industrialized countries owe to the poor (Laudato Si', n. 51 and 52).

The Holy See Delegation hopes that the final decisions of this Conference may be inspired by a genuine sense of responsibility towards present and future generations, as well as the care of our common home, and that these decisions may truly respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor (Laudato Si', n. 49). "Time is running out: this occasion must not be wasted." (Letter of Pope Francis to the Catholics of Scotland).