



C7 communiqué 2021

Civil society's recommendations to the G7

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Preamble

We, the representatives of over 200 civil society organisations from around the world have come together at this crucial moment in history to call on the leaders of the G7 to agree a bold and ambitious policy agenda that puts people and planet at the centre of the world's recovery. The G7 is just one of numerous important intergovernmental meetings in 2021 so we also call for a progressive policy agenda to be addressed at the G20, COP26 and other important international moments, and for the G7 to support efforts to strengthen the United Nations and other multilateral forums where all countries participate. We humbly ask G7 leaders to **model** the vision they have previously articulated for more open and just societies by pursuing policy agendas that are consistent with these values and respect the human rights of all people, at home and abroad.

This agenda must be rooted in the principles of (1) **sustainability** - we call for an approach that meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; (2) **inclusivity** - G7 leaders must keep the promise to 'leave no-one behind' especially during this global pandemic by ensuring every policy measure reaches all people that face systematic exclusion, injustice, social and economic disadvantage and (3) a transformative shift in **financing, decision-making and power** to the communities that are directly affected by each issue, thus recognising the evidence that development interventions are most effective when they are led by directly affected communities. We remind G7 leaders of their commitments to help to deliver and finance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and call for urgent action to get the SDGs back on track.

Background

This communiqué has been coordinated by Bond, the UK network for organisations working in international development. This statement reflects the policy positions and priorities of over 200 civil society organisations in G7, African and Asian countries working together to support strong, progressive and ambitious outcomes at the 2021 G7 Summit and associated ministerial meetings.

These recommendations outline civil society's assessment of some of the overarching political, economic, foreign policy and development challenges facing the world and our policy proposals for how the G7 can play a progressive role in addressing these challenges. This statement complements and supports other G7-focused documents and papers prepared independently by civil society organisations. We support the recommendations submitted by the W7, Y7 and L7 and call for a G7 agenda that responds to the rights and concerns of diverse women, young people and workers. In particular, we recognise the need for youth participation and accountability measures to encourage and facilitate youth participation and advocacy across the G7's policy agenda to support young people to engage with politicians and officials at every level.

A transformative agenda to address global challenges

The following recommendations are relevant to all G7 ministerial tracks, and are especially focused on the discussions with G7 leaders.

Global sustainable economic recovery after the pandemic

Since the start of the pandemic, tight restrictions on the free movement of people have brought economic activity to a halt resulting in job losses and uncertainty for millions. The economic impact of the pandemic has been felt both inside G7 countries and beyond as small businesses and workers have seen their incomes reduce, or disappear entirely. While trillions of US dollars have been spent to support recovery from the pandemic, the majority of this funding has been spent in industrialised nations.

The economic damage caused by the pandemic represents the largest economic shock in decades. In the first half of 2020 alone, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reported a 49% drop in foreign direct investment. Highly indebted countries and lower-income countries, without access to the resources needed to fund their economic recoveries, will need financial support and investment. Instead of reflecting the G7's emphasis on 'Building Back Better', we are calling for the G7 to 'Build Forward' from the pandemic and avoid returning to an unsustainable and exploitative "normal".

G7 leaders should respond positively to the call for a new economic model rooted in fairness, sustainability, inclusion and human rights. G7 leaders should pursue economic policy reforms that put the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable people first, and address inequality within G7 countries and beyond. Gender equality must be central to a new economic model, beginning with a recognition of the crisis of care in modern economies where countries are failing to adequately recognise the significant responsibilities of providing for children, vulnerable older people and care for people with disabilities which disproportionately falls on women and girls and limits their opportunities to pursue education and job opportunities.

G7 countries must adapt from the old models where countries have pursued economic interests without sufficient regard for their impact on climate and nature. We want to see a sustainable recovery, powered by green jobs, and for governments to seize the opportunity of this moment - where millions of people around the world have already made changes to the way we live, work and travel - to pursue ambitious policy reforms that will deliver the green revolution the world needs. G7 countries have been among the biggest beneficiaries of the current economic system that destroys the very resources that our lives and livelihoods depend upon, with the costs falling disproportionately on the poor and those who have benefited least from this system. G7 countries therefore share a responsibility to lead the necessary reforms to herald a new economic model for the global economy.

Recommendations:

Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure all G7 climate finance commitments prioritise the countries and communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.2. Commit to investing 2% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in care industries in G7 countries, and support countries around the world to pursue similar investments.
Policy	Support the reinvention of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as a multilateral forum focused on aligning trade rules to other international standards, especially the

	SDGs and Paris Agreement, and address the longstanding concerns of low- and middle- income countries, particularly regarding food and agricultural trade policies.
Programmes	Support universal social protection and proposals for a Global Fund for Social Protection .

Global leadership to address the climate and ecological crises

Climate impacts are rising rapidly. Millions of people in lower-income countries are already living with climate change - homes are uninhabitable, land unfarmable, access to clean water unpredictable, access to education compromised, and lives unbearable - yet they are least responsible for the causes of climate change. At the same time, globally, nature is in decline: habitats and species are being lost, land degraded, and the seas overexploited, with implications for all our futures.

Humanity has been slow to act on the climate and ecological emergencies, but across the world, countries and communities are declaring emergencies – 1,932 jurisdictions in 34 countries – and are now demanding decisive and urgent action from global leaders to prevent catastrophic consequences. The G7 must prioritise the goals of the Paris Agreement and SDGs into global recovery spending to avoid catastrophic, widespread, and irreversible impacts on lives and livelihoods. Under the Paris Agreement, countries have committed to pursuing efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C, yet despite growing efforts and announcements, we remain dangerously off course.

While there have been some encouraging new climate related targets from G7 nations in recent months, civil society is calling for stronger leadership from the UK Presidency in the lead-up to COP26. G7 leaders must align their rhetoric on the global stage, and domestic policies that can undermine this rhetoric - such as the UK's decision to issue new licensing for oil and gas exploration in the North Sea, and the recent announcement that Japan intends to release 1 million tonnes of contaminated water from the Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea.

Recommendations:

Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure all G7 spending and investments to support economic recovery after the pandemic are consistent with the goals to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. 1. Significantly increase commitments and disbursements of climate finance, especially achieving a 50% target for climate change adaptation, a key priority for 2021. Funding for adaptation should prioritise the most vulnerable countries and communities and not compromise non-climate ODA.
Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End all investment from all G7 countries for all fossil fuels overseas and significantly scale-up support to lower-income and vulnerable countries to ensure renewable energy access for all. 2. Publish a roadmap by the first G7 Finance Ministers meeting of 2022 detailing how they will phase out fossil fuel subsidies by 2025.

	3. Introduce domestic 'due diligence' legislation to prevent commodities associated with deforestation from entering business supply chains and to prohibit finance institutions in G7 countries from funding deforestation.
Global Initiatives	All G7 countries should sign the Leaders Pledge for Nature and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature.

A just and equitable approach to sharing vaccinations for Covid-19

To address Covid-19 and other health inequalities, health systems must be strengthened nationally, regionally and globally. We need an equitable approach to global health security, rooted in the principle of global solidarity. At the heart of the global response to Covid-19 must be a commitment to universal access to Covid-19 vaccines with the G7 and other industrialised countries sharing the know-how, supply, technologies and removing intellectual property barriers. Wealthy nations should not block the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver so that countries can produce their own vaccinations and meet their domestic demand, especially given the rise and inevitable consequence of new COVID-19 variants. Vaccines must be treated as a global public good rather than a commodity.

There is a gap between the G7's rhetoric of global solidarity in response to COVID-19 and the approach to sharing vaccinations against Covid-19. Canada and the UK have both purchased enough vaccines for their populations to be vaccinated five times over and there has been early competitive procurement of vaccines with evidence of 'vaccine nationalism' or a 'vaccine apartheid' over scarce supplies. Despite G7 commitments to help vaccinate 20% of the population in Low-Income and Lower-middle-income countries by end of 2021 via the equitable vaccine initiative, COVAX, to date, less than 1% of all vaccines are being used in low-income countries. Commitments to share surplus vaccine supplies with COVAX lack detail as to when and how many doses will be shared despite the urgent need to ensure global access. In terms of geopolitical strategies, Russia, India and China have all directly donated vaccines, and the G7 risks falling behind in this regard.

Recommendations:

Finance	Increase funding for the Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator to help to close the funding gap of the USD 19 billion still required for 2021. For COVAX in particular, USD 6.3 billion has been secured but an additional USD 2 billion is needed for this year.
Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start sharing surplus vaccinations with COVAX so that as a matter of priority healthcare workers and vulnerable people everywhere can be vaccinated and incrementally increase dose sharing throughout 2021 so that, by the time countries have enough doses for their entire populations, G7 countries will have donated all surplus doses. 1. Commit to eliminating Covid-19 vaccination inequality by not blocking the TRIPS waiver so that lower-income countries can produce their own vaccinations. 2. Work with national governments, World Health Organisation and other multilateral agencies to ensure 60% of the population in every country are offered a vaccine by the end of 2021.

Threats to democracy, open societies and democratic institutions

Democratic values and traditions have come more under threat both inside G7 countries and beyond. In recent years, governments around the world have used the pandemic as a pretence to introduce or expand emergency laws and regulations that restrict freedom of assembly, association, participation, expression, media freedom and access to information. Civil society, human rights, refugee rights, democracy and the rule of law have been significantly undermined due to the pandemic. Trends like rising authoritarianism, corruption, securitisation, discrimination and political instability have all been exacerbated as a result.

Racial, religious, gender and sexual minority/LGBTI communities, people with disabilities and refugees and displaced people, and the groups that represent them are often on the front line of the risk to civic spaces, including in countries that will be represented at the G7. G7 leaders undermine their moral authority when they prioritise economic and financial objectives, such as the pursuit of new trade deals, at the expense of speaking out against human rights abuses and discrimination.

Illicit financial flows should be prevented as corruption undermines democracy and denies citizens access to much needed resources. Illicit financial flows are a global problem, including in the City of London and other global financial centres, where policy measures must be strengthened to fight corruption. The G7 should promote people's movements for democracy and human rights as seen in Hong Kong, Belarus, Thailand and Myanmar in partnership with other democratic governments.

We stand in solidarity with civil society groups challenging legislation that could limit rights to freedom of protest and assembly in the UK, new voting laws that risk exacerbating voter suppression in Georgia, USA and a perceived crackdown on protesters in France. We urge the G7 to galvanize a renewed political commitment to counter the threats to open societies worldwide by initiating a process that leads to a Global Open Societies Compact in 2022 – a robust international framework that will advance the human rights critical to strengthening democracies and defending against authoritarianism.

Recommendations:

Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send stronger messages of solidarity in the face of threats to civil society and the civic space. Establish dedicated policy initiatives outlining the G7's goals for the future of civil society and issue a statement on the G7's support for civic space and open societies. This statement should call on the Organisation for Economic-Cooperation and Development (OECD) to work with global civil society and governments towards the development of a Global Open Societies Compact by hosting the discussion on its substance, providing data, and monitoring its implementation. 2. Include robust anti-corruption provisions in new trade agreements.
Diplomacy	Use all diplomatic channels and influencing tools to encourage governments to protect civil society's rights to freedom of assembly, association, participation, expression, opinion and access to information online and offline.
Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand in solidarity with human rights defenders, environmental activists, civil society activists, protesters whistle-blowers and journalists by ensuring these individuals and their organisations have rapid access to national and regional

	<p>emergency protection funds, and providing long term, flexible funding for civil society and media organisations to enable them to become more effective and resilient in the face of increased restrictions.</p> <p>2. Increase resources for anti-corruption law enforcement agencies across G7 countries.</p>
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An agenda for racial justice

The consequences of racism and racial discrimination are damaging. They touch almost every aspect of life including health and education outcomes, interactions with the criminal justice systems and access to jobs and opportunities. While the consequences of racism and other associated forms of oppression, such as colourism and xenophobia, manifest differently depending on the context - racism is global in its reach with almost every society scarred by its consequence and responsible for leading efforts to promote anti-racist policies that deliver racial justice and equality.

Institutional racism is a deep and growing problem in many G7 countries and in the past year civil society organisations have increased the call for leaders to finally address systemic racism and inequality inside G7 countries. Leaders must begin with an assessment of how systemic racism manifests in each G7 country and develop national plans to address discrimination.

Leaders must also address the ongoing injustices in the global economic system, and their painful historical legacy grounded in the effects of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism and exploitation, if we hope to withstand similar crises in the future. This is a necessary precondition for any steps towards a more just and equitable world, and a requirement, if we hope to withstand similar crises in the future.

Through the Grand Bargain, and many global conferences on aid effectiveness, leaders have agreed to target more funding, power and decision making to organisations in the global South. But they are yet to deliver on these commitments. There are profound inequities in the distribution of Northern wealth through official sources, such as ODA. The latest figures show that only 0.4% of humanitarian funding goes directly to Southern organisations.

Recommendations:

Political leadership, accountability and restorative justice	<p>G7 leaders should issue a statement expressing their collective commitment to address each nation's historic role perpetuating racial injustice, acknowledge and address the consequences of these historical injustices and how they manifest in inequalities both within and between countries. Leaders should also respond positively to calls for reparations - as a means of accountability and justice.</p>
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Finance	As a starting point to correcting these inequities, double the share of G7 ODA that flows directly to organisations in the global South by 2023 and review ODA procurement rules across G7 countries to ensure companies and organisations from the global South do not face unnecessary barriers in bidding for contracts with G7 development agencies.
Policy	Review and strengthen procurement rules from all G7 development and foreign relations agencies to ensure that companies and organisations in the global South do not face systematic barriers to bidding for development contracts.

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