



Joint Church letter on finance for countries hit by climate disasters

[As published in the Times, Friday 29 November 2019 \[paywalled\].](#)

This election campaign has seen a welcome focus on climate change. However, little attention has been paid to the UK's international role. As a rich nation which has benefited from "cheap" fossil fuel energy, the UK should support poorer countries in their responses to the climate crisis. As well as finance and technology to aid a global transition to zero carbon, this support must include funding and debt relief for countries hit by climate-related disasters.

The UN has found that climate disasters now occur at the rate of one a week. There is no international agreement on how finance should be provided for countries suffering loss and damage, and the burden continues to fall on poorer countries that have done little to cause the crisis, plunging them deeper into poverty.

The COP25 UN climate talks starting next week in Madrid present an opportunity to make progress on this issue.

All people are equal in the sight of God – and this truth must be reflected in our actions. The UN talks must include and listen to communities in the global south, for whom climate issues are matters of life and death. Whatever the election outcome, the next government has a moral duty to address these issues of global justice.

Rev Ken Benjamin, president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain

Richard Bradbury, CTE Ground Level Network of Churches

Derek Estill, moderator of the general assembly of the United Reformed Church

Dr Richard Frazer, convener of the Church and Society Council, Church of Scotland

Rev Jill-Hailey Harries, president, Union of Welsh Independents

Professor Clive Marsh, vice-president of the Methodist Conference

Paul Parker, recording clerk, Quakers in Britain

Elizabeth Slade, chief officer, General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

Rev Nigel Uden, moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.