



THE PRIME MINISTER



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It gives me great pleasure to offer my support to the G8 +5 Legislators and Business Leaders Climate Change Dialogue that will run through to the Japanese G8 presidency in 2008.

I have no doubt, whatsoever, that climate change is the greatest environmental challenge we face. The evidence of such change is now overwhelming. The predictions of the scale of the changes ahead and their impact are frightening. Without action to curb human's greenhouse gas emissions experts predict that global average temperatures could rise by as much as 5.8°C and sea levels by 88 cm by the end of this century. Such change will dramatically alter our environment, our economies and our way of life.

That is why I made climate change a priority for the UK's G8 presidency in 2005. The G8 countries must take a leadership role in overcoming this challenge. It is our economies and societies which are still largely responsible for the increase in greenhouse gases. We must take urgent action to reduce the damage we are doing. We also have the economic power and research and development capacity to come up with the technological solutions needed to make the changes necessary without damaging prosperity.

But an effective and sustainable solution also needs the involvement of all the world's large energy users. The economies of countries such as China, India, Brazil, South Africa and Mexico are growing fast and, as a result, their greenhouse gas emissions are rising rapidly. They have, of course, a right to develop, as we have done, so their citizens and societies become more prosperous. The challenge is to help them learn from our experiences so they grow sustainably and minimise the impact on our planet.

The good news is that the technology is fast becoming available, whether through renewable energy, cleaner fossil fuel technology, hybrid vehicles or energy efficiency, to enable economic development without locking in long-term emissions increases. This technology needs to be shared and support given to enable it to be widely used.

This is why the Gleneagles Dialogue, agreed at the G8 Summit last year, is so important. Its aim is to identify common ground where countries can work together to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. And with the involvement of influential organisations such as the World Bank and the International Energy Agency, the Gleneagles Dialogue will be as well-informed as possible.

I am delighted that GLOBE, in partnership with the Com+ Alliance, has created a forum for legislators from the G8 and major emerging economies to discuss these important issues in an open and frank manner. Importantly, I note that the GLOBE Dialogue will shadow the G8 discussions and will seek to make regular contributions. Legislators have a crucial role in raising awareness, encouraging debate in their constituencies and, of course, holding their leaders to account.

I know that the conversations and debate you begin today will be well-informed, insightful and, more importantly, a very valuable contribution to the international debate.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Blair". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first letter of "Tony".

February 2006