

## 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference

The 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, more commonly referred to as COP28, is the 28th annual meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In early 2021 the United Arab Emirates offered to host the 2023 event,[5] and in November 2021 the prime minister and vice president of the United Arab Emirates announced that the UAE would host the conference. The United Arab Emirates is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world, due to its very hot and humid climate. The UAE pledged to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050; the first Middle Eastern government to make such a pledge.[5] In September 2023, in advance of the opening of COP28, the United Nations published the first two-year assessment of global progress towards the Paris Agreement. Roughly 2 months before the conference, some called for an increase in international cooperation which they saw as a necessary condition for the success of the conference. At the end of November 2023, a pre-COP meeting of ministers was held. 100 delegations and 70 ministers attended, more than any previous COP. Before the conference, Pope Francis issued an apostolic exhortation called *Laudate Deum*, calling for brisk action against the climate crisis. China's representative declared that China, the United States, and the European Union agreed to cooperate to ensure the success of the conference. On 15 November, the United States and China announced an agreement based on negotiations between climate envoys John Kerry and Xi Jinping. In September 2023, in advance of the opening of COP28, the United Nations published the first two-year assessment of global progress towards the Paris Agreement. Sultan Al Jaber was named President-Designate of COP28 UAE in January 2023.[43] He is the CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company. Al Jaber's presidency of the COP28 climate change conference contradicted his company's decision to expand fossil fuel production. In January 2023, Dubai Cares became the Education partner for COP28. It had already participated in COP27 held in Sharm El-Sheikh. In April 2023, the UAE organizers of COP28 told the speakers at the climate and health conference to not protest or "criticise corporations". The UAE invited the president of Syria, Bashar al-Assad to COP28. According to Human Rights Watch the UAE was assisting Assad's regime. In June 2023, governments gathered in Bonn to prepare for COP28. HRW highlighted that the UAE doesn't allow freedom of expression. On 7 June 2023, a report based on technical analysis by The Guardian revealed that Sultan Al Jaber's ADNOC was able to read the emails of other oil and gas industry leaders. In August 2023, John Kerry urged the oil and gas industry leaders to bring strategies at COP28 to cut their scope 1 (directly caused emissions) by 45% by 2030. Pope Francis was scheduled to attend the COP28 for 3 days however was forced to cancel his trip after contracting influenza developed in Rome. On the starting day of the summit on 30 November 2023, a "loss and damage" fund to compensate poor states for the effects of climate change was agreed. In his opening speech of the conference, Charles III expressed alarm at rising levels of pollution, saying that the world was "dreadfully close to a point of no return". COP28 is the first COP to discuss the impact of climate change on public health.[61] In a letter addressed to Sultan Al Jaber, the meeting was urged to "mainstream public health in all meetings". Previously, experts such as Edmond Fernandes have urged UNFCCC to mainstream[clarification needed] public health in all meetings. Ahead of the COP28 summit between political leaders of the world, the Muslim Council of Elders in partnership with the COP28 Presidency, issued a statement. Prior to the conference, the UAE attempted to whitewash its international reputation. The country hired PR and lobbying agencies, including the US-based firm, First International Resources, to "counteract all negative press and media reports" around the conference. Campaigning journalist Amy Westervelt has been critical of lead-up efforts by the UN organizers to improve the transparency of COP28. During the past decade, the UAE has spent more than \$1 million on direct climate-focused advocacy and paid millions more to advertise its image. A report based on leaked documents by The Guardian revealed that the UAE prepared an all-inclusive list mentioning the "touchy areas" to avoid. The UAE hired a US-based PR firm, First International Resources, to "counteract all negative press and media reports" around the conference. In August 2023, The Guardian revealed that for nearly a decade, the UAE failed to report its methane emissions to the UN. Meanwhile, the UAE has been adapting its conference facility, the prior site for Expo 2020, to host the COP28 climate conference. FairSquare, a human rights group, raised concerns that the UAE might continue to use digital surveillance to spy on human rights activists. Ahead of COP28, Amnesty International raised concerns that the UAE might continue to use digital surveillance to spy on human rights activists. On 7 November 2023, an AFP investigation revealed in multiple leaked documents that McKinsey was using its position as the primary advisor to the UAE to influence the conference. On 27 November 2023, According to the Centre for Climate Reporting and BBC, leaked documents revealed the UAE intended to use the conference to promote its fossil fuel interests.