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**Course:** Modern Politics

**Assignment:** 2

**Article 1**

**Top lawyers defy bar to declare they will not prosecute peaceful climate protesters –** Damien Gayle

**Source:** <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/mar/24/top-lawyers-defy-bar-declare-will-not-prosecute-peaceful-climate-protesters>

**Summary**

More than 120 mostly English lawyers, including 18 barristers — six of whom are king’s counsel — have signed a declaration refusing to support new fossil fuel projects and to abstain from prosecuting peaceful climate protesters. The so-called “declaration of conscience” argues that the climate breakdown poses a threat to the rule of law and calls for lawyers to do everything possible to combat the ecological and climate crises. The signatories will now self-refer to the Bar Standards Board for breaking the profession’s “cab rank” rule. Nick Vineall, chair of the Bar Council of England and Wales, accused the lawyers of undermining the principle of impartial legal representation.

**Analysis**

The decision by over 120 mostly English lawyers, including 18 barristers, to sign the declaration refusing to support new fossil fuel projects and to abstain from prosecuting peaceful climate protesters is a significant development in the ongoing climate change debate. The lawyers' decision highlights the growing concern among legal professionals about the climate crisis and the role of the legal system in addressing it.

The "declaration of conscience" is a clear call to action for legal professionals to act urgently and address the causes and consequences of the climate and ecological crises. By signing the declaration, the lawyers are taking a strong stance against the fossil fuel industry and the legal system that they argue works in favor of it. They are calling for a just transition that addresses the ecological and climate crises and recognizes the serious risks to the rule of law posed by climate breakdown.

The decision by the lawyers to sign the declaration has been criticized by some, who argue that it undermines the principle of impartial legal representation. The cab rank rule, which requires barristers to take on cases they are qualified for and available to do so, is seen as a key principle of the legal system that ensures access to justice. However, the lawyers argue that the rule should not be used to defend the interests of the fossil fuel industry, which they claim is responsible for the loss of human life and property.

The decision by the lawyers to self-refer to the Bar Standards Board for breaking the "cab rank" rule may have significant consequences for the legal profession. While barristers found to be in violation of the rules can receive fines, junior members of the profession may find themselves blocked from receiving silk, awarded to king’s counsel, or from promotion to the judiciary. However, the lawyers' decision may also be seen as a sign of changing attitudes among legal professionals towards the climate crisis and the role of the legal system in addressing it.

Overall, the decision by the lawyers to sign the declaration refusing to support fossil fuel projects and to abstain from prosecuting peaceful climate protesters is a significant development in the ongoing climate change debate. It highlights the growing concern among legal professionals about the climate crisis and the role of the legal system in addressing it. While the decision has been criticized by some, it may also be seen as a sign of changing attitudes within the legal profession towards the climate crisis and the need for urgent action.

**Opinion**

It is worth noting that the decision by the lawyers to sign the declaration refusing to support new fossil fuel projects and to abstain from prosecuting peaceful climate protesters is a significant development in the ongoing climate change debate.

The declaration highlights the growing concern among legal professionals about the climate crisis and the role of the legal system in addressing it. It calls for a just transition that recognizes the serious risks to the rule of law posed by climate breakdown and takes urgent action to address the causes and consequences of the climate and ecological crises.

While the decision by the lawyers to self-refer to the Bar Standards Board for breaking the "cab rank" rule may have significant consequences for the legal profession, it is also a clear sign of changing attitudes among legal professionals towards the climate crisis and the need for urgent action. The decision may also help to raise awareness about the role of the legal system in addressing the climate crisis and the need for a just transition that addresses the ecological and climate crises.

**Article 2**

**Scientists deliver ‘final warning’ on climate crisis: act now or it’s too late -** Fiona Harvey

**Source:** <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/mar/20/ipcc-climate-crisis-report-delivers-final-warning-on-15c>

**Summary**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has issued a “final warning” on the climate crisis. The IPCC’s mammoth sixth assessment report, which took eight years to compile and runs to thousands of pages, delivers one message: act now, or it will be too late. The report sets out the devastation already caused by climate breakdown and warns that if greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, the world will rapidly reach the point of irrevocable damage. The IPCC says that more than 3 billion people already live in areas vulnerable to climate breakdown and half the global population experiences severe water scarcity for at least part of the year. The report calls for swift and drastic action to defuse the “climate timebomb”, warning that governments must invest in renewable energy and low-carbon technology and reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions as close to 2040 as possible.

**Analysis**

The IPCC's latest report is a sobering reminder that we are fast approaching the point of no return when it comes to the climate crisis. The report clearly outlines the devastating consequences of rising greenhouse gas emissions and warns that only swift and drastic action can avert irrevocable damage to our planet. The fact that over 3 billion people already live in areas highly vulnerable to climate breakdown and half the global population experiences severe water scarcity for at least part of the year is a stark reminder of the urgent need for action.

The report highlights the need for governments to invest in renewable energy and low-carbon technology, but it's not just up to governments. We all have a role to play in reducing our individual carbon footprints and pushing for change in our communities and industries. It's time to take responsibility for our actions and make the necessary changes to ensure a livable sustainable future for all.

While the report is a dire warning, it also offers hope. The IPCC states that if greenhouse gas emissions can be made to peak as soon as possible, and are reduced rapidly in the following years, it may still be possible to avoid the worst ravages that would follow a 1.5C rise. This means that we still have the opportunity to make a positive impact and create a better future for ourselves and future generations.

The IPCC's report is a call to action for all of us. We must act now to reduce our carbon footprint, push for change in our communities and industries, and hold governments accountable for taking swift and decisive action to address the climate crisis. The time for action is now, and we cannot afford to wait any longer.

**Opinion**

The urgency and importance of the IPCC's latest report cannot be overstated. It is clear that we are rapidly approaching a point of no return when it comes to the climate crisis. The consequences of inaction are dire, and we must take swift and decisive action to reduce our carbon footprint, push for change in our communities and industries, and hold governments accountable for taking action.

It's time to recognize that the actions we take today will have a profound impact on the future of our planet and future generations. We cannot afford to wait any longer to make the necessary changes to ensure a livable sustainable future for all. The IPCC's report is a wake-up call, and we must answer it with action.