

# NJPN North West Justice & Peace E-Bulletin October 2022

The e-bulletin for the North West, linked to the National Justice and Peace Network (NJPN), is produced jointly within the dioceses of Lancaster, Liverpool, Salford, Shrewsbury and Wrexham. Please send diary dates to [anneoc980@hotmail.com](mailto:anneoc980@hotmail.com)

## OPINION: ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION IS PART OF LIZ TRUSS'S PLAN

**George Monbiot** 30 September 2022

The ecological destruction Liz Truss plans to unleash on this country is not collateral damage. It is not a by-product of her economic programme. It's a mark of true faith, a sign that she is following her ideology to the letter. For fundamental to this doctrine – neoliberalism – is the belief that everything on Earth can and should be turned into something else.

The founding father of neoliberalism is Friedrich Hayek. His frankly deranged tract *The Constitution of Liberty* enjoys almost biblical status among his disciples. Margaret Thatcher was perhaps the book's most famous advocate, and Truss now carries the flame. It inveighs against the protection of the living world. Rather than seeking to protect the soil – the delicate ecosystem from which 99% of our calories are produced – Hayek says it makes sense to extract as much value as it can produce, exhaust it “once and for all”, then abandon the land. The role of soil is to create a “temporary contribution to our income”, which we can then invest in other moneymaking schemes. For “there is nothing in the preservation of natural resources as such which makes it a more desirable object of investment than man-made equipment”.

Our destiny, according to this belief system, is to turn nature into money. If you point out that the ecological collapse this causes will destroy every aspect of our lives, including our economy, neoliberals reply that resources are, in effect, infinite: minerals will continue to be found, ecosystems will renew themselves. This summer, as the drought that now threatens our rivers and water supplies began, John Redwood MP stated: “The water regulators and companies want us to use less water in the years ahead. Why? Water is the ultimate renewable resource, available in abundance on our planet. They should get on with putting in the capacity so we can use what we want.”

This mindset denies not only environmental crises, but material reality. If money – which is all they know – can be magicked into existence, why can't everything else?

It is within this frame that we should understand what Truss proposes. She wants to rip down our planning controls, creating “investment zones” in which corporations and oligarchs can build what they want. The policy is justified by trickle-down economics: let the housebuilders do their worst, and some of the homes they build might be affordable to the poor. But the industry uses endless ruses to avoid building affordable homes, and it carefully manages supply, sitting on its land banks to keep prices high. There are far better ways of getting the housing we need. A team of us proposed some of them in our report to the Labour party, *Land for the Many*. But the defensive ring built around property by the billionaire press frightens almost everyone away.

Truss's proposals, by contrast, solve nothing, while permitting scarcely regulated urban sprawl across some of the most beautiful landscapes in England. According to the Adam Smith Institute, one of the dark-money lobby groups that has shaped her thinking and supplied some of her key advisers, these zones are a step towards dismantling the planning system nationwide.

She is also rushing through parliament a bill that will delete 570 environmental laws inherited from the EU. The speed of this programme ensures that, even if she intends to replace them with laws of equal strength, there would be a regulatory hiatus in which anything goes. All experience suggests that she will not replace them with laws of equal strength, but introduce weaker laws or none at all.

It was Truss who turned me vegan. In 2015, when she was environment secretary, I stumbled across a shocking case of river pollution: a dairy farm had built a pipe from one of its slurry lagoons into a river, reducing a beautiful ecosystem to a stinking sewer. I reported it to the Environment Agency, but it refused to take action. After I expressed my astonishment in the *Guardian*, two separate whistle-blowers from the Environment Agency contacted me. They told me, citing pressure from the government, that they had been instructed to disregard all incidents of this kind. If the government wasn't prepared to regulate the industry, I decided, I wasn't prepared to eat its products.

Truss volunteered her department for massive funding cuts. Against the advice of experts, she insisted on letting farmers dredge the watercourses passing through their land, without oversight or regulation. An Environment Agency report showing how such dredging wrecks the ecology of streams and rivers while increasing the risk of flooding downstream, was deleted from government websites. She was the worst environment secretary we've ever had, which is quite a feat when you remember her predecessors.

Now her government plans to ditch the only genuine benefit of Brexit. The EU's common agricultural policy, which pays farmers for maintaining land in “agricultural condition”, is one of the most destructive policy instruments on Earth, a giant perverse incentive to destroy wildlife habitats. This was going to be replaced in the UK with the payment of public money for public goods, such as the protection and restoration of habitats. But, to the delight of the National Farmers' Union and the horror of the good farmers that it fails to represent, the government will revert to the regressive practice of paying people to own land. It's another transfer of money to the rich and another incentive for destruction.

Truss has reversed the ban on fracking in England, though even the founder of the UK's first fracking company says it's a waste of time here. Never mind the geology, it's the principle that counts. Truss gave the energy brief to Jacob Rees-Mogg, or Re-Smog as environmentalists call him. He has told his staff "we have to get every cubic inch of gas out of the North Sea": a policy that, if replicated around the world, commits us to Earth systems collapse.

We should see Truss's government as an experiment: what happens when neoliberal ultras, schooled by the dark-money thinktanks, get everything they want?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/sep/30/environmental-destruction-is-part-of-liz-truss-plan>

• **George Monbiot** is a Guardian columnist

## NATIONAL TRUST ISSUES 'RED LINES' ON GREEN PROTECTIONS AFTER LIZ TRUSS LAMBASTS 'ANTI-GROWTH COALITION'

**Isabella Cipirska** 9 October 2022

The National Trust has issued seven "red lines" it says should not be crossed as it raised the alarm about the new Government's policies on the environment.

The conservation charity warned that Liz Truss's plans to grow the economy should not come at a cost to the environment and urged her to adopt a "green, not grey" growth agenda.

It expressed concerns about a number of new Government policies – including lifting the ban on fracking, removing planning regulations in "investment zones", and reviewing environmental farming subsidies – which conservationists say amount to "an attack on nature".

The Prime Minister has sparked anger after accusing green groups of being a part of an "anti-growth coalition" intent on trying to "hold us back" by seeking "more regulation and more meddling".

In an interview with *The Sunday Times*, the director-general of the National Trust, Hilary McGrady dismissed the accusation as "a nonsense", warning that the UK was "facing one of the biggest threats to nature in my lifetime".

"To try to demonise us as being anti-growth is just unfair and untrue," she said, adding that the National Trust was "a reasonable organisation" and "we want to work with governments, but it is notable that we have largely been side-lined." She also pointed out that many of the organisation's 5.7 million members are Conservative Party members who are concerned about the Government's proposals. "Many of them are writing to me on a daily basis saying, 'We want to do more here'... they're very willing to get in behind and support a bigger campaign. I have held back from doing that at the minute. But I am prepared to," said Ms McGrady.

The charity has set out seven red lines it wants upcoming policies to adhere to, such as upholding protections for the environment and heritage in the law, prioritising green growth, and delivering on manifesto commitments such as protecting 30% of the UK's land for nature by 2030.

Result: the economy falls off a cliff, while the fabric of the nation is ripped apart. Conclusion: we should never again let such people near government.

At last, the big conservation groups are stirring. The RSPB, the Wildlife Trusts and the National Trust, with a combined membership of almost 8 million, now talk of mobilising. It's about time: for far too long they have failed to use their power, while successive governments have laid waste to the land. But, in fighting it, we should stop interpreting Truss's vandalism as an accidental outcome of other policies. It is the policy.

It warned that new investment zones must not create "grey zones" devoid of nature or historic character in which the public have no say. It also called for new farm payments to keep the same level of commitment to reward farmers for public goods – from cleaner rivers to healthier soils and protecting our cultural heritage.

Harry Bowell, director of land and nature at the trust, argued that the country could not have "growth at any cost". "If we tarmac over green space, if we allow a planning free-for-all in our towns and cities, if we don't invest in nature – then we put economies, livelihoods and wellbeing in danger," he said. "People need green space, they need local heritage and character, and they need a say in shaping the places where they live. We need to pursue growth with deeper roots."

Several other environmental groups which have spoken out about government policies in recent days, including the RSPB, The Woodland Trust, The Wildlife Trusts and CPRE. They are particularly concerned that laws inherited from the EU after Brexit covering environmental regulations – including water standards and air pollution – may be ditched by the end of 2023, despite Government assurances that the most important regulations will be replaced.

In her speech to the Conservative conference on Wednesday, Ms Truss said: "All EU-inspired red tape will be history."

A spokesman for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs told i: "Claims we intend to go back on our commitment to the environment are simply not right. We are committed to halting the decline of nature by 2030 and will not undermine our obligations to the environment in pursuit of growth.

"A strong environment and a strong economy go hand in hand. We have legislated through the Environment Act and will continue to improve our regulations and wildlife laws in line with our ambitious vision.

“We are not scrapping farming reforms. We are committed to environmental land-management schemes that will support our farmers to produce high-quality food and enhance our natural environment.

“We want every corner of our country to prosper, too. Bureaucratic processes in the planning system do not necessarily protect the environment, so by making sure we have the right regulations for our nation, we can make this happen.”

<https://inews.co.uk/news/environment/national-trust-red-lines-green-protections-liz-truss-anti-growth-coalition-nature>

## THE NATIONAL TRUST’S SEVEN ‘RED LINES’

1. The Government should prioritise **green growth** (including the 440,000 green jobs promised in the Net Zero Strategy);
2. Any changes to existing laws must not water down critical **protections for the environment and heritage**;
3. New investment zones must not create **grey zones** devoid of nature or historic character in which people have no say about the development that impacts them;
4. New **farm payments** must keep the same level of commitment to reward farmers for public goods, from cleaner rivers to healthier soils and protecting our cultural heritage;
5. Government should **listen and collaborate** with the public, as well as conservation charities, farming groups, businesses and others who can inform decision-making on what it proposes;
6. Any changes to Government and its agencies must not adversely affect their ability to deliver on manifesto commitments, such as **protecting 30% of the UK’s land for nature** by 2030;
7. The Government must stay true to its **net-zero** legal obligation and strategy – fracking is not the answer.

## HOPE AMID CLIMATE CHAOS: ‘WE ARE IN A RACE BETWEEN ARMAGEDDON AND AWESOME’

Renewables, decarbonisation, activism, cooperation ... The challenge is immense, but the situation is far from hopeless

**Damian Carrington Environment editor The Guardian** 4 October 2022

Every one of us will love someone who is still alive in 2100, says climate campaigner Ayisha Siddiq. That loved one will either face a world in climate chaos or a clean, green utopia, depending on what we do today.

It’s a powerful reason for action, providing hope that the will for transformative change can be found. But are there more tangible reasons for optimism in fighting the climate emergency? The challenge is undoubtedly immense: carbon emissions have yet to start falling and must plummet by half by 2030 to avoid the worst outcomes.

Yet the situation is far from hopeless. From the exponential growth of green solutions to the power of protest, experts say there is a clear path to limiting the damage. The question is how fast we can travel along it.

“We have everything we need in terms of technology and, in terms of the actual physics, we know what we need to do,” says Solitaire Townsend, co-founder of change agency Futerra. “The vast majority of solutions have a really significant benefit to our health and wellbeing, income and standard of living around the world. We are in a race between Armageddon and awesome.”

The shining light of climate hope is the exponential growth of ever-cheaper renewable energy, which now delivers 75% of all new power – coal has plummeted to just 4%. An important recent study found that a swift transition to clean energy would save trillions of dollars, even without accounting for the enormous damage continued fossil use would cause. Even climate deniers should be on board with that, says study author Prof Doyne Farmer at the University of Oxford.

Electric vehicle sales are also rising exponentially. Sales in China doubled year-on-year in August, to more than 500,000. Both of these green technologies have passed tipping points in many places – they are now simply so good and cheap that a runaway takeover is inevitable.

Such positive tipping points are crucial, says Prof Tim Lenton at the University of Exeter: “We need to go more than five times faster than we are at decarbonising the global economy. So finding and triggering positive tipping points is a way to create the necessary acceleration of change.” Pushing important sectors more quickly towards tipping points is the aim of a little-reported but potentially very powerful initiative launched at the UN climate summit in Glasgow in 2021 – the Breakthrough Agenda, supported by 45 nations including the US, China, India and the EU.

“We’ve got to change massive chunks of the global economy and do that really fast,” says Simon Sharpe, director of economics for the UN’s climate champions. “It’s obvious you’ll manage that better if countries work together and they are focusing on making clean technologies and sustainable solutions the most affordable, accessible and attractive option.”

For example, he says, a global tipping point for electric vehicles could arrive years earlier if the biggest markets coordinate the date when all new car sales must be zero emission. Similar efforts could also clean up the vital but high emission sectors of steel and cement.

Bernice Lee, an expert on climate politics at Chatham House, says: “Good results at a global level are built on strong domestic, local and regional action and, that being

the case, there are reasons for some optimism." The "big four" of the US, China, India and the EU are all taking action, she says.

Furthermore, the increasing number of climate-driven extreme weather disasters hitting the world now, such as vast floods in Pakistan, is an important catalyst for change. "It's quite clear that climate impacts will do a fair amount of lifting as an incentive," Lee says.

The energy bills crisis in Europe caused by the war in Ukraine has emboldened fossil fuel interests to push for new oil and gas exploitation. But senior figures say the war will ultimately boost climate action, not block it. "The case for a global energy transition is more solid now than before the invasion," says Christiana Figueres, formerly the UN's top climate official. "Once we are on the other side of the current Russian blackmail, no one will want to be [held] hostage again." Norway's prime minister Jonas Gahr Støre says: "The war is pushing significant speed-up of the installation of solar, offshore wind, hydrogen, and the rest of it."

Geopolitics is also the key to an issue now at the heart of the climate challenge: climate finance. The nations of the global south, which did not cause global heating, want funding for cutting emissions, adapting to inevitable impacts and recovering from damage wrought by supercharged extreme weather.

The issue could dominate the next UN climate summit in Egypt in November.

"What needs to happen at COP27 is for finance facilities for loss and damage and for adaptation to be established," says Siddiqa, a campaigner with Fridays For Future Pakistan. "It is central to the whole thing."

For years, major nations like the US have blocked such funding, fearing unlimited liability. But there is movement, with Denmark this month becoming the first national government to commit loss and damage funds. There is also movement in funding green energy transformations in specific countries, with European nations providing \$8.5bn to South Africa.

New ideas for raising the required money are coming forward too, from the \$500bn in IMF finance proposed by Mia Mottley, the prime minister of Barbados, to a global tax on fossil fuels put forward by the most vulnerable countries.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/oct/04/hope-climate-chaos-renewables-science>

## CAMPAIGN TO SAVE OUR OCEAN

Massive fishing nets scoop up the seabed destroying everything and killing hundreds of marine animals. The EU is supposed to release a new plan that could ban this type of fishing, but it's delayed, AGAIN. Why? Because of the fishing industry. The EU could ban this destructive practice in protected areas. But the fishing industry wants to prevent the ban so they can continue to maximise profits by catching huge quantities of "product" in one go.

UN secretary general Antonio Guterres backs the latter idea, particularly targeting the colossal profits being reaped by the oil and gas industry at the moment. "The fossil fuel industry is feasting on subsidies and windfall profits, while household budgets shrink and our planet burns," he said last week. "I call on all developed economies to tax the windfall profits."

Guterres has become extraordinarily blunt: "The fossil fuel industry is killing us." Another leader speaking out against fossil fuels is Pope Francis. Such attacks provide hope by eroding the legitimacy of the powerful sector, which has continually worked to block climate action.

Perhaps the most powerful voice for action has been that of youth activists, whose future is at stake. Lee says they represent our conscience: "They do a very important job in helping hold politicians to account for the future."

Siddiqa says: "We do have the power at our disposal. We have the ability to change popular opinion and culture – we have done it."

Pressure for action is also building from consumers in the commercial sphere, according to Townsend, demanding change from the big companies and advertisers that are so expert in shaping what we buy and how we live.

"Online searches for plant-based diets have had a 90% increase over the last year," she notes. "It's one of the biggest Google search jumps."

Another bright spot in climate action, often overlooked, is the global progress on reducing HFC coolants, which are powerful greenhouse gases as well as destroyers of the ozone layer. This action alone could reduce global heating by 0.5C. A global pledge to slash methane, another powerful greenhouse gas, has been made by world leaders, as has one to halt deforestation, though previous efforts to protect forests have delivered little.

It will never be too late to act. However high global temperature rises, every tenth of a degree that is avoided means someone somewhere suffers less. "We need to knuckle down as much as we can to prevent every 0.1C rise," says Prof Bill McGuire, at University College London.

Youth activist Siddiqa says: "We need to make sure that [our loved ones alive in 2100] have access to all the beauty of the world that we had access to and that we leave behind a better world. We need to be good ancestors. That's the thing that keeps me going."

Together, let's counter the pressure the EU is facing from the fishing industry with a massive show of people power. More than 200 scientists have written a statement supporting the ban. Sign now to stop the fishing industry from destroying our ocean!  
<https://act.wemove.eu/campaigns/destroying-our-ocean>

## LETTER TO JACOB REES-MOGG, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

25 September 2022 **Source: Laudato Si' Animators**

Dear Mr Rees-Mogg, We would like to offer our congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. We felt that such a strong Catholic as yourself would help to promote Catholic Social Teaching (CST) on environmental responsibility.

Therefore, it is with great disappointment that we read about your determination to press for more oil and gas extraction from the North Sea, and about your meeting with oil and gas companies in a bid to boost North Sea supplies. We feel obliged to point out that this attitude is short-sighted, and seems to be at odds with CST. You are trying to help solve the energy crisis with an action that will increase the planetary crisis in the future, which is the precise attitude which has got us into the position of planetary breakdown in the first place.

You say "2050 is a long way off. We're not trying to become net zero tomorrow."

Even if the world ended all fossil fuel production immediately, we are still on the course of planetary meltdown unless other actions are taken, such as ending methane production from farming and industry and stopping pollution from farming and industry. So immediate action to end fossil fuel extraction and use, and to develop clean energy are only parts of the solution, parts that have to be taken seriously.

You must have read reports of Pope Francis speaking in the strongest terms about taking immediate steps to end fossil fuel production and consumption. For instance, on 14-6-2019, he said to oil and gas executives whom he met at the Vatican: "The climate crisis requires our decisive action, here and now".

At that meeting he appealed to oil and gas companies to move from fossil fuels to renewable energy in order to prevent climate change pushing the world's poorest people deeper into poverty. As if speaking directly to you he said, "our desire to ensure energy for all must not lead to the undesired effect of a spiral of extreme climate changes due to a catastrophic rise in global temperatures, harsher environments and increased levels of poverty". He told the fossil fuel representatives that switching to clean energy, "is a duty that we owe towards millions of our brothers and sisters around the world, poorer countries and generations yet to come."

In his Encyclical Laudato Si' he said, "the effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now," #161. And in # 169 he talks about future generations not having to suffer, "the effects of our ill-advised delays".

To us, it seems clear that the Pope is calling for an immediate end to fossil fuel extraction, as a means not only of saving the planet but also of providing for the needs of poor people.

Do you feel that we may be wrong, and that your actions regarding fossil fuels are more in keeping with present Catholic teaching?

What are the strategies that you plan to put in place to ensure a rapid end to fossil fuel production and consumption? We look forward to your response.

**Note:** Laudato Si' Animators UK is a group of people who have graduated from the Catholic Laudato Si' Movement's 'Animators' Course', which is set up to educate and enable people to inspire others, in parishes, schools and in the world at large, to engage in dialogue and action on the current environmental crisis.

**See here for a full list of signatories:** <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/45562>

## BISHOP OF SALFORD CALLS FOR RETHINK ON LIFTING FRACKING BAN

28 September: The Bishop of Salford has called on the government to rethink lifting a ban on fracking because he believes it is a threat to local people. John Arnold, lead on environmental issues for the Roman Catholic church, said it was a "short-term" solution. His comments follow a letter sent by a Roman Catholic church group to Business Secretary Jacob-Rees-Mogg questioning his policy on oil and gas. The government said it is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

Speaking on BBC Radio Lancashire, Bishop Arnold said the decision by Mr Rees-Mogg to restart "dangerous" fracking was "remarkable" when the process was "clearly a threat to the local population, their property and their wellbeing". "It seems to me a very short-term look at a solution on energy," he said.

Fracking is the process of drilling into the earth and directing a high-pressure mixture of water, sand and chemicals at a rock layer to release the gas inside. A ban on the process, put in place after a series of earthquakes at energy firm Cuadrilla's Preston New Road site, near Blackpool in 2019, was lifted last week. The government's lifting of the ban came alongside the publication of a review into fracking by the British Geological Survey (BGS). It had concluded there was still a limited understanding of the impacts of such drilling.

Mr Rees-Mogg told the House of Commons it was "important" to use all available sources of fuel within the UK rather than import them. But Bishop Arnold said: "We've got to be looking for renewable energy without going for fossil fuels. The idea of fracking producing the sort of energy needs we have is nonsense. We've got to be looking to renewables." He said the Catholic church teaching was "very clear" that "we've got to look after our common home. We are damaging it in very serious ways at the moment to the point that some of the damage is going to be irreparable," he added.

Stephen Garsed, Roman Catholic Diocese of Lancaster's Environmental Justice Group lead, said fracking "will not reduce the price of gas and will not solve our gas needs". He said the environmental damage fracking would cause in relation to the amount of gas it would produce was "untenable". Local people were "very concerned and outraged", Mr Garsed said, adding that the industry needed to be "very upfront about the risks and the benefits".

A Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy spokeswoman said lifting the pause on shale gas extraction will allow the government "to gather further data and make sure this is done as safely as possible and where there is local support". The government remains "fully committed to the legally binding target of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050", she added.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-63062304?fbclid=IwAR3q4pFTYhNDn3GDHLT55bAZKF7T4DKUAFgLDmECcCOPWfUhfPtBHq4frU>

## COP27 MOBILISATIONS: THIS CRISIS DEMANDS ACTION

### Climate Justice Coalition, UK

November 12 will see mass mobilisations across the country and put thousands of people on the streets to demand climate justice in solidarity with the Global Day of Action called by Egyptian groups at COP27.

<https://www.cop27coalition.org/events/newly-launched-cop27-coalition-calls-for-global-mass-action-for-climate-justice-reset-of-climate-talks-ahead-of-egypt-cop>

Global temperatures, rising. Energy bills, rising. Billionaire profits, rising. While people are being forced to choose between heating and eating, energy companies are making record-breaking profits. From bailouts to big business, ramping up more deadly fossil fuels to trashing nature and cutting our wages the Government is refusing to listen. Their policies both here and globally are causing devastation with working people and people of colour – who have contributed the least to the problem – paying the price with killer famines, floods, crop failures, fires and rising poverty.

To stop this crisis we need action that cuts carbon, tackles inequality and ends the injustices baked into our world. This year world leaders will meet in Egypt for COP27 and African movements have called for a Global Day of Action for climate justice. Communities in the global south need urgent climate finance and reparations for the loss and damages that have caused mass destruction of lives and livelihoods.

Justice won't be handed to us by world leaders or delivered by corporations. We need to organise in our communities and ensure that not only is no one is cold or hungry this winter but that we stop the headlong rush into climate catastrophe.

Sign & share the **Egyptian Human Rights Coalition on COP27 petition** demanding the opening up of civic space in Egypt, and the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners: <https://copcivicspace.net/petition/>

**The Africa Peoples Counter COP** is being organised from 17-21 October, with hybrid events and decentralised actions: <https://www.africacclimatejustice.org/copy-of-apcc-2021-1>

**Egypt Solidarity COP27 Resources and Toolkit:** <https://egyptsolidarityinitiative.org/cop27toolkit/>

**Find out about the global fight for Climate Justice and Human Rights in Egypt this year at COP27:**

<https://www.cop27coalition.org>

**More information:** [https://climatejustice.uk/cop27/?mc\\_cid=882423f78a&mc\\_eid=6b697c8305](https://climatejustice.uk/cop27/?mc_cid=882423f78a&mc_eid=6b697c8305)

## CAFOD SAY "TELL THE PM TO STOP THE COP-OUT AT COP27"

A year ago, thousands of us demanded leaders take the action necessary to end the climate emergency as they gathered in Glasgow at the COP26 climate talks. Progress was made – but it wasn't enough. Too many cans were kicked down the road to the next UN climate summit, COP27, which is taking place in Egypt in November. The reality of the climate crisis has only become more stark since leaders left Glasgow. Millions of our sisters and brothers in East Africa are fighting to survive a catastrophic food crisis made even worse by the climate crisis, with millions more members of our global family in Pakistan left homeless by unprecedented flooding. Heatwaves during the summer in the UK placed extraordinary strain on fire brigades and the NHS, while our energy bills are soaring as a result of volatile fossil fuel prices.

It's clear we need leaders to put us on track to end the climate crisis. We need them to stop kicking the can down the road. So join us in urging the Prime Minister to work with other leaders at this year's climate talks to stop the COP-out at COP27. <https://action.cafod.org.uk/page/113421/action/1>

## COMMENT: THE WAR IN UKRAINE LAUNCHES A NEW BATTLE FOR THE RUSSIAN SOUL

**Masha Gessen** *The New Yorker* 9 October 2022

Russia says that it has expanded. On September 30th, President Vladimir Putin signed a document that ostensibly accepted four Ukrainian regions as members of the Russian Federation. The residents of those regions, Putin said in a speech, “have become our citizens forever.” He made this assertion as the Ukrainian Army was liberating territory to which Russia was laying claim. He was not just trying to snatch propaganda victory from the jaws of evident military defeat; he was laying the groundwork for fighting for those lands ever more aggressively. A week and a half earlier, he had ordered the military to draft hundreds of thousands of new soldiers, and had threatened to use nuclear weapons.

A Russia that includes parts, or all, of Ukraine and untold other lands is the Russian World, a vague and expansive idea pioneered by the self-styled philosopher Aleksandr Dugin, some of whose ideas have been adopted by the Kremlin. In August, his thirty-two-year-old daughter, Darya, also an imperialist pundit, was killed by a car bomb that may have been intended for him. Last week, the Times reported that U.S. intelligence believes a part of the Ukrainian government may have been behind the attack. If true, this suggests that the government puts strong, probably unfounded, faith in the power of the concept of the Russian World.

Putin, in his speech, described both the Russian World and the larger world as he sees it. According to him, the West destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991, but Russia came back, defiant and strong. Now the West wants to destroy Russia. “They see our thought and our philosophy as a direct threat,” he said. “That is why they target our philosophers for murder.” The ultimate goal of the West—specifically, the United States and Great Britain—is to subjugate people around the world and force them to give up traditional values, to have “‘parent No. 1,’ ‘parent No. 2,’ and ‘parent No. 3’ instead of mother and father (they have completely lost it!),” and to teach schoolchildren that “there are some other genders besides men and women and offer them sex-change operations.” Putin has said, repeatedly, that only Russia can save the world from this menace. This is the story of a world in which his war in Ukraine—and the draft, and even, perhaps, a nuclear strike—makes sense.

But when the world shaped by the feedback loop of propaganda collides with the world of facts on the ground, things begin to crack. On October 5th, two videos circulated widely on Russian-language social media, including in normally pro-war quarters. The videos show a crowd of men in uniform. They say that there are five hundred of them and that they were recently drafted. They complain of “animal-like” conditions, of having to buy their own food and bulletproof vests, and of a lack of organization. “We are not registered as part of any detachment,” one man says. “We have weapons, but these are not officially issued to us.” Meanwhile, some Russian television propagandists have been acknowledging Ukrainian victories, and urging Russians to prepare for a long wait before their country can attack again.

It’s too early to make assumptions about where these tiny cracks may lead. It is not too early, however, to think about what a future, militarily defeated Russia might look like. This is what Alexey Navalny, the opposition politician who has been in prison since January, 2021, has been doing. The Washington Post recently published an op-ed, smuggled out by Navalny’s legal team, in which he writes that Russia deserves to lose the war and that, once it does, it must be reconstituted as a parliamentary, rather than a Presidential, republic. This, he argues, will insure that no one person can usurp power in Russia as Putin has.

Navalny’s op-ed serves to illustrate Putin’s wisdom, of sorts—the wisdom of keeping his most important political opponent behind bars. Navalny seems to have missed a cultural turning point. In the seven and a half months since Russia launched its full-scale invasion, hundreds of thousands of Russians have left their country. Many of them are journalists, writers, poets, or artists, and they, along with some who are still in Russia, have been producing essays, poems, Facebook posts, and podcasts trying to grapple with the condition of being citizens of a country waging a genocidal colonial war. Some of their Ukrainian counterparts have scoffed at their soul-searching. Ukrainians, indeed, have bigger and more immediate problems. But they also have certainty—they know who they are in the world, while for Russians nothing is as it once seemed to be.

One of the earliest examples of this outpouring was a poem, by the children’s-book author Alexey Oleynikov, about the incongruity of trying to flee Russia with a pet hedgehog in tow. One stanza reads, “We will not wash the shame off until our old age, until we die / There have been worse times, but there has never been a more ridiculous time.” Posted on Facebook, the poem went viral in March.

May’s viral poem, by the actress and poet Zhenya Berkovich, tells of a young Russian man visited by the ghost of his grandfather, who fought in the Second World War; the ghost asks his grandson to forget him, lest the memory of his valour be used to justify the current war.

This month’s viral poem, by Eli Bar-Yahalom, an Israeli Russian, is a dialogue between God and a Muscovite who hopes to return home someday. “There is no resurrecting Bucha, no raising up Irpin,” God says, referring to suburbs of Kyiv where Russians appear to have committed war crimes.

There are also at least two Russian-language podcasts devoted to the issues of individual and collective responsibility for the war. And Linor Goralik, an acclaimed Russian writer born in Ukraine and living in Israel, has founded an online journal called ROAR (Russian Oppositional Arts Review), which has published three packed issues.

The last time people were writing in Russian so urgently was in the late nineteen-eighties. Soviet citizens back then had been confronted with their past—the Stalinist terror. That moment gave Russia, among other things, Memorial, the human-rights organization that, along with Ukrainian and Belarusian activists, won the Nobel Peace Prize last week. Now Russian citizens are being

• Published in the print edition of the October 17 2022 issue of *The New Yorker* with the headline “Different Worlds”.

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/10/17/the-war-in-ukraine-launches-a-new-battle-for-the-russian-soul>

## ‘WE WANT THE CLERICS TO GET LOST’: IRAN’S SCHOOLGIRLS EMERGE AS POWERFUL VOICES OF DISSENT

9 October 2022: On Monday night, 16-year-old Elnaz sat at home in the Iranian city of Karaj and wept with shock and rage as she scrolled through social media posts about the death of Nika Shakarami. The 17-year-old schoolgirl was allegedly tortured and killed by Iran’s security forces as they try to suppress the protests that erupted after the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish woman, allegedly beaten by police for infringing the hijab regulations. The next morning, Elnaz arrived at school to find a small group of friends gathered in the playground, pulling off their hijabs and shouting: “Death to the dictator.” “I was in tears when I saw the other girls standing together in protest and felt like I betrayed the memory of Nika by not doing more to express my anger. So I pushed back my headscarf, and joined them,” she says. She says the death of Shakarami has proved a tipping point for her and hundreds of other schoolgirls across Iran.

All week, allegations surrounding the circumstances of Nika Shakarami’s death have been circulating on social media. She was reported missing on 20 September after joining a protest in Tehran, amid claims that she had been beaten, raped and her body stolen and buried by the regime in a village away from her family. Although the authorities claimed that Shakarami killed herself, her mother has accused the security services of murdering her, claiming that they tried to force her to say her daughter had taken her own life.

“We want the clerics to get lost. Our mothers didn’t have the internet to tell the world what was done to them, but we do. I am here for Nika and for all other Iranian sisters who lost their lives but haven’t made the news,” Elnaz says.

On Tuesday, videos showing teenage pupils at Elnaz’s school and others across the country waving their headscarves in the air and shouting defiant protest slogans went viral. Many Iranians have been shocked to see schoolgirls emerging as a powerful force of protest. Videos posted on social networks have shown girls tearing down portraits of the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in classrooms and throwing them in the waste bin, a treasonous act in Iran. Others show girls

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/oct/09/iran-protests-schoolgirls-videos-khamenei>

## PETITION: MAINTAIN SANCTIONS AND INTRODUCE VISA BAN ON PEOPLE LINKED TO IRANIAN REGIME

We demand the UK Government stop any kind of negotiations to ease sanctions on the Iranian regime until the human right issues in Iran is resolved. We also demand the UK to immediately stop issuing and renewing UK Visa for individuals linked to the Iranian regime. Current protests in Iran require support from the world powers to succeed. Since the start of protests, the internet has been blocked, protestors reportedly attacked and killed, and many have been arrested. Easing sanctions on the regime provides it with money that we don’t want it to have. There also should not be officials connected with the Iran regime interests in the UK. **Sign the petition:** <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/623572/signatures/new>

confronted with their present. The writers in exile have physically fled their country (as has much of Memorial’s leadership) and are trying to write their way to a new Russia. Their imagination extends far beyond the Russian constitution to a world that’s radically different, and better than not only Putin’s revanchist Russian World but the world we currently inhabit.

berating male officials and shouting “Woman, Life, Freedom”, echoing the slogan being shouted on the streets as protests over the death of Amini entered their third week.

Elnaz says that although the school administration has discouraged them from protesting out of concern for their safety, they have done little to stop the demonstrations. “Our teachers initially opposed [the protests] only for our safety as they feared the regime’s forces will break down the gates. Yet nothing happened, and we continue to gather to protest at the school,” she says. My mother always told me how she wants me to fight for freedom. She said the world thinks Iranians are just fighting now because freedom was curbed recently, but we were never free. We will take our country back from the mullahs.” Throughout the week, Elnaz and her friends have been talking with other girls in schools across Iran on private messaging groups that have emerged during the protests.

In the nearby city of Rasht, Naznin, another 16-year-old schoolgirl, says she and her friends were also galvanised to protest by the killings of Nika and Sarina Esmailzadeh, another teenage girl allegedly beaten to death while protesting on the streets of Tehran on 23 September. “A lot of our blood has been spilled. We only found out about Sarina’s death this evening after seeing it on Twitter,” Naznin says of the popular YouTuber. “Within minutes, her videos were being shared among all the girls in our private message groups. She was exactly like Nika – she was fearless, determined and a young Iranian who wanted us to join the fight for Mahsa. “I can’t get over her smile. I am so angry,” she says.

Naznin says all of her friends and the other schoolgirls she is in contact with who are protesting across Iran are aware of how dangerous their actions are. “Yet I am not afraid because I have nothing to lose,” she says. “If I don’t join the protests, we will die anyway of hunger and high prices, or the government will kill us just like Mahsa. But I will try to survive these protests for my family.”



## LIZ TRUSS ON VERGE OF MAJOR U-TURN ON REAL-TERMS BENEFITS CUT

**Tory MPs warn PM she would lose vote on increasing benefits only in line with earnings rather than inflation**

**Aubrey Allegretti and Patrick Butler** *The Guardian* 9 October 2022

Liz Truss is teetering on the edge of performing another big U-turn as Tory MPs warned she would lose a vote on delivering a real-terms cut to benefits while new research showed the move could push an extra 450,000 people into poverty.

Despite desperate pleas for party unity from senior ministers after weeks of bitter infighting, the row over welfare threatened to overshadow the prime minister's attempt to reassert her authority when the Commons returns from recess on Tuesday.

Fresh threats of moves to oust Truss if she digs in were also being discussed by MPs over the weekend, while senior Tories, including former chancellor George Osborne, warned the Conservatives ran the risk of a wipe-out at the next election for embarking on a "political experiment".

In their ring-around of colleagues on Sunday, government whips were warned that dozens of Tory backbenchers would rebel against benefits rising in line with earnings – about 5.5% – rather than September's inflation figure, which stands at about 10%.

While no formal vote is required, it is believed that an amendment would be tabled to the finance bill which would force all MPs to show their hand. Unease extends the full length of the party, with some figures in the cabinet thought to be pushing Truss to match the inflation increase. One government source put the number of backbenchers who would rebel at least 30, while another said No 10 would be "forced to cave".

Truss's U-turn last week to reinstate the top rate of tax after the chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng, announced it would be abolished in the mini-budget has given some Tory MPs heart they can force another climbdown. "She gave in on 45p, she'll have to do so again," said one. In a sign Truss was softening her stance, a No 10 source insisted "nothing is decided" and added: "She will listen."

It came as new analysis by a conservative thinktank, seen exclusively by the Guardian, showed low-income households with children, or people with disabilities, would bear the brunt of any move to uprate universal credit and other working-age benefits in line with earnings rather than inflation. Such a move would swell UK relative poverty rates already at their highest level this century, the Legatum Institute said, as the cost of living crisis leaves millions of people struggling to pay energy bills and put food on the table regularly. Legatum estimated more than 1.5 million more people in the UK will be in relative poverty this winter compared with before the Covid pandemic, even after the government's energy support packages. Real-terms benefit cuts next April would boost the overall figure to 16 million, nearly a quarter of the UK population.

Tory peer Lady Stroud, the chief executive of Legatum, urged ministers to uprate benefits in full. "Failing to do so ... would consign many on low incomes to a winter of impossible choices between heating their homes, putting food on the table or putting fuel in their car to get to work," she said.

Conservatives from all wings of the party are angry Truss is prepared to drop Boris Johnson's promise, made in May, to uprate benefits in full, potentially leaving millions of low-income families hundreds of pounds worse off in the middle of a cost of living crisis. Those who have publicly opposed a real-terms cut to benefits include the Commons leader, Penny Mordaunt, the former chief Brexit negotiator Lord Frost, and the former culture secretary Nadine Dorries, who called the cuts "cruel" and "a lurch to the right". Stephen Crabb, a Conservative MP and former work and pensions secretary, said the Legatum findings were "further evidence cutting benefits in real terms will inevitably lead to an increase in poverty and hardship, at the worst possible time".

The welfare budget was targeted by ministers after it became clear the government would need to cut billions from public spending after its disastrous mini-budget last month. Uprating by earnings would save the Treasury about £5bn, an option condemned by anti-poverty campaigners as "morally indefensible".

The Legatum Institute analysis found uprating benefits in line with earnings rather than – as is the convention – September price inflation would result in 450,000 more people in poverty in 2023-24. Of these, 350,000 would be in households where someone works, and 250,000 in families that included a disabled person. Such a cut would also result in a quarter of a million more people pushed into "deep poverty", defined as an income at least 50% below the official poverty line. People in deep poverty are in near destitution, facing a constant struggle to afford basic essentials such as food, energy, clothing and toiletries. Legatum also modelled the impact of an even more severe real-terms cut – freezing benefits at their 2022 levels. This would result in an extra 1 million people in relative poverty next year, including 700,000 people in deep poverty.

The findings were echoed in a separate study by the charity Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), which concluded 200,000 children – almost all in families where one parent is working – would be in poverty if benefits were raised in line with wages rather than inflation.

An analysis by consultants Policy in Practice estimated low-income families would be almost £400 a year worse off as a result of real-terms cuts. The cut is even larger for some groups, with in-work households losing out by £458 and couples with children £640 worse off.

Given the Conservatives' poll ratings, which are hovering about 30 points behind Labour, some have warned Truss could lead the party to electoral annihilation. Dorries on Sunday told the BBC that if an election were held tomorrow, the Tories would face a "complete wipe-out", while Osborne believed voters would judge the prime minister's "political experiment" harshly. "I think a Tory wipe-out is potentially on the cards, but we've got two years to run," he told Channel 4. However, Nadhim Zahawi, the chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, appealed for colleagues to come together and warned that inter-party division would only hamper delivery of policies, leading to defeat. He said the Conservatives had 24 months to win back trust, suggesting the election would be in October 2024.

A Department for Work and Pensions spokesperson said: "The secretary of state commences her statutory annual review of benefits and state pensions from late October using the most recent prices and earnings indices available. We are committed to looking after the most vulnerable which is why we've delivered at least £1,200 of support to families this winter while also saving households an average of £1,000 a year through our energy price guarantee. This support is on top of the annual working-age benefits bill which is over £87bn."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/oct/09/liz-truss-on-verge-of-major-u-turn-on-real-terms-benefits-cut>

## **JO JOHNSON HITS OUT AT 'DISAPPOINTING' BRAVERMAN COMMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

**Dominic McGrath The Independent**

The Home Secretary has sparked the latest row to hit the Tory party, after comments about international students prompted a rebuke from former universities minister Jo Johnson. Suella Braverman appears to have international student numbers in her sights, as she used several media and Conservative Party conference appearances to suggest that the scale of foreign students coming to the UK to study was too high. In an interview with The Sun newspaper over the weekend, the Home Secretary said: "We've also got a very high number of students coming into this country and we've got a really high number of dependents. So students are coming on their student visa, but they're bringing in family members who can piggyback onto their student visa. Those people are coming here, they're not necessarily working or they're working in low-skilled jobs, and they're not contributing to growing our economy."

When asked if she feels anything stopping others coming into the country as her parents are from Mauritius and Kenya, she said: "I have no qualms about that". She added that she "delights" in annoying the left.

She doubled down on the comments at the party's conference in Birmingham, telling the Chopper's Politics podcast that her "ultimate aspiration" would be to get net migration down into the tens of thousands while refusing to set a target for the next election. She explained how she wanted to target student and work visas, and the dependents they can bring with them, adding: "I think we have too many students coming into this country who are propping up, frankly, substandard courses in inadequate institutions."

The comments drew the ire of Lord Johnson, a peer and the brother of the former prime minister, who called the remarks "disappointing". He warned that they "bode ill for her period as Home Secretary if this is going to be her approach to, frankly, one of the most promising export industries that the UK has". Our higher education sector is one of very few globally competitive industries that we have as a country," he told Times Radio. "If we want to be a science superpower, which is one of the Government's objectives, you can kiss goodbye to that completely if we don't have international students. Our universities are a really great national asset for the UK and this relentless uni-bashing is a bit wearisome."

He also hit out at comments by education minister Andrea Jenkyns about so-called "Harry Potter degrees". The minister for skills, further and higher education told a fringe event at the conference that a "skilled modern economy" required technical skills as much as it needed graduates, and criticised the "current system" for favouring degrees in 'Harry Potter studies'. It's a bit of an old cliché. It used to be that 'Mickey Mouse studies' was the favourite sort of target for attack and now it's become Harry Potter studies. The reality is, these courses are few and far between relative to the numbers of really valuable courses that our higher education system is providing," Mr Johnson said. "Our universities are a really great national asset for the UK and this relentless uni-bashing is a bit wearisome, so I would urge ministers to go easy on the sort of relentless negativity about a sector which is really one of our great strengths as a country."

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/suella-braverman-jo-johnson-home-secretary-conservative-party-the-sun-b2195444.html>

**Read more:** <https://www.ukpol.co.uk/suella-braverman-2022-speech-to-conservative-party-conference/>

## SUELLA BRAVERMAN'S REFUGEE PLAN IS ILLEGAL. THE UK WILL IMPLEMENT IT ANYWAY

**Alex MacDonald** Middle East Eye 5 October 2022

Refugee organisations have balked at new proposals by the British government to ban refugees who cross the English Channel from seeking asylum.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman set out the new plans at the Conservative Party conference on Tuesday in a bid to cut down the number of migrants taking the dangerous journey from France. "If you deliberately enter the United Kingdom illegally from a safe country, you should be swiftly returned to your home country or relocated to Rwanda. That is where your asylum claim will be considered," she said in her speech. "UK policy on illegal migration should not be derailed by abuse of our modern slavery laws, Labour's Human Rights Act, or orders of the Strasbourg Court."

Braverman said she would overhaul the Modern Slavery Act to prevent asylum seekers claiming to be victims in order to prevent deportation. The Times reported on Monday that any legislation would be worded in such a way as to not put the UK in violation of the 1951 Refugee Convention, although a number of party sources told the newspaper that the country could be forced to leave the convention in order to implement it.

A spokesperson from the Refugee Council told Middle East Eye that refugees should not be "criminalised" and expressed concern that the move would put further pressure on the country's obligations under international law. "Prime ministers since Winston Churchill have committed to the Refugee Convention - which we were a founding signatory of - and we should be strengthening our commitment to this, not seeking to break from it," said Enver Solomon, the organisation's CEO.

Others suggested that the country could end up in breach of any number of international legal requirements. "Banning anyone who crossed the Channel from applying for asylum here is unlawful as it's in breach of the Refugee Convention, the Human Rights Act and common law," said Beth Gardiner-Smith, CEO at Safe Passage International, speaking to MEE. "Trashing Britain's record on human rights, and as one of the architects of the Refugee Convention, is reckless - it will cost lives and is bad news for us all."

Refugee groups had already been highly critical of existing government legislation targeting the Channel crossings. A policy of deporting refugees who arrived in the UK by irregular means to Rwanda was widely condemned and ran into legal problems, with the first attempted flight in June being blocked by court action. However, Braverman has repeatedly boasted of her willingness to confront legal blocks on the government's policies, threatening even withdrawal from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

So far, the only countries to have withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the ECHR are Russia earlier this year, following the invasion of Ukraine, and Greece in 1969 <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/uk-suella-braverman-refugee-plan-illegal>

following a military coup (it was later re-admitted). No country has taken the step of withdrawing from the Refugee Convention, though many countries are not party to it.

According to Daniel Sohege, a lawyer and director of Stand For All, a consultancy firm specialising in immigration, the emphasis on penalising potential asylum seekers based on their method of entering the country was very likely illegal under international law. "The Convention sets out very clearly that someone seeking asylum must not be penalised for their manner of entry. That is one of the most crucial aspects of international refugee law, as it recognises that the majority of refugees are not in a position to wait until someone decides that they can travel by a 'resettlement route'," he explained.

He added that the current existing Rwanda scheme - which has still yet to be fully implemented as a result of its own legal problems - would be inadequate under the new proposals. "Would someone fleeing persecution from Iran, of which a high proportion of those crossing the Channel are, be sent back there?" he asked. "This would clearly contravene the European Convention on Human Rights, among other things, regarding inhumane treatment."

At least 30,000 people have reportedly made the crossing over the Channel in small boats so far this year, an increase on 2021. Though polling has generally shown sympathy for refugees among the wider British public, the ruling Conservative Party has repeatedly focused on the issue and argued that tackling them is necessary to save migrants from exploitation by people smugglers. However, rights groups argue that the ultimate impact of the policies has simply been to make seeking asylum in the UK at best unattractive and, at worst, impossible.

Yumna Kamel, legal education officer at Right to Remain, told MEE that what Braverman was proposing was largely a "continuation" of the policies pursued by her predecessor, Priti Patel, and the Nationality and Borders Act (NABA) passed earlier this year. "Unless the reason for seeking asylum arises after a person's arrival in the UK, according to NABA, it is now near impossible to enter the UK 'legally' with a view to claiming asylum," she explained. "Most people arrive clandestinely, via lorry or small boat, or by using a false passport - which the Refugee Convention pardons in many circumstances, but NABA has curbed in the UK - because most people are fleeing danger."

Sohege said that the new policy, much like those previously implemented by Patel, had little to do with protecting migrants. "It is a policy designed to stoke outrage in its inhumanity and illegality, not to be a practical means by which to reduce Channel crossings, which would require a focus on providing safer routes and simpler access to the UK asylum system," he said.

## SUELLA BRAVERMAN SAYS SEEING A PLANE TAKING OFF TO RWANDA IS HER “DREAM”

**Lizzie Dearden Home Affairs Editor The Independent** 6 October 2022

Suella Braverman has said that seeing a flight take asylum seekers to Rwanda is her “dream” and “obsession”. But the new home secretary told an event at the Conservative Party conference that she does not expect any planes to take off until after Christmas, because of ongoing legal challenges.

“I would love to have a front page of The Telegraph with a plane taking off to Rwanda, that’s my dream, it’s my obsession,” Ms Braverman said. “[Starting by Christmas] would be amazing but if I’m honest I think it will take longer. We’ve got to come out of the legal dispute we are currently embroiled in.”

Last month, The Independent revealed the full horrors of the first attempted Rwanda flight in June, which saw asylum seekers restrained and attached to plane seats after self-harming and threatening suicide.

**Read here:** <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/rwanda-flight-self-harm-suicide-b2158661.html>

Forms filled out by custody staff after “use of force incidents” show how the detainees started crying, screaming, shouting and frantically calling lawyers and loved ones after being told they would be sent to Rwanda. The asylum seekers were kept in custody vans and on the plane, at Boscombe Down, for hours before the flight was cancelled amid a wave of injunctions granted by the European Court of Human Rights.

The first High Court challenge over the Rwanda deal, which was signed by Priti Patel in April, was heard last month and the second will begin on Monday. Judges are expected to rule on them both later this month, but Ms Braverman said that judgment could be challenged at the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court and European Court of Human Rights. “Unfortunately, we’ve got to let that play out,” the home secretary added, appearing at an event hosted by the Chopper’s Politics podcast.

The home secretary, who was previously the attorney general, said that efforts by Boris Johnson and Ms Patel were “thwarted by our laws” and hinted at changes to the Human Rights Act and modern slavery legislation. She confirmed that the Bill of Rights drawn up by former justice secretary Dominic Raab had been shelved, but that elements concerning the impact of the European Court of Human Rights were being taken forward.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/suella-braverman-rwanda-dream-obsession-b2195296.html>

**Read also:** <https://saveourrights.uk/what-we-stand-for/human-rights-act-reform/>

## CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK ENGLAND AND WALES 17-23 OCTOBER 2022

### GREATER MANCHESTER LAUNCH EVENT - CHALLENGE POVERTY, DIGNITY FOR ALL

17 October 2022 at the Methodist Central Hall on Oldham Street M1 1 JQ from 10am-3pm with breaks included throughout the day.

Current confirmed speakers and contributors to the event include:

Councillor Amanda Chadderton, Leader of Oldham Council and GM Cabinet Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Cohesion; The Credit Union; Inspire Women Oldham; Representatives from GM Poverty Truth Commissions; GM Disability Panel Reps; Illegal Money Lending Team; The Bread and Butter Thing. plus many more to be added.

**Ways to get involved in Challenge Poverty Week:** Meet your MP; Host a discussion or story-telling event; Take to the streets; Get creative; Speak up on social media; Speak to your local media.

### **Living Not Just Existing: Dignity For All**

## COULD YOUR GROUP OR CHURCH BE INTERESTED IN RUNNING A LOCAL PANTRY?

During Challenge Poverty Week, we're holding a 'What is a Pantry?' online event - come along if you can.

**What is a Pantry?** Tuesday 18 October, 2pm to 3pm. Online event.

During lockdown, Pantries proved to be a great support to communities. Now, during the cost of living crisis, Pantries soften the blow of high living costs. Pantries create a safe place for communities to come together and thrive. Not only do pantries provide food for low costs, but also builds relationships in a supportive environment so together, people can reclaim dignity, choice and hope.

Taking place during Challenge Poverty Week, the online "What is a Pantry?" event will highlight how Pantries help tackle poverty and uphold dignity in local communities. Learn more about the awareness week and other events are taking place throughout the week by visiting the Challenge Poverty Week England and Wales (2022) website at

<https://challengepoverty.co.uk/>

## DANIEL BARENBOIM STEPS BACK FROM PERFORMING DUE TO HEALTH CONDITION

Paul Glynn BBC News 2 October 2022

Classical conductor and pianist Daniel Barenboim is taking a step back from performing after being diagnosed with a "serious neurological condition". The Berlin-based 79-year-old had cancelled a series of concerts earlier this year for health reasons. On Tuesday, the Grammy-winner tweeted to say he would be dropping more engagements in the coming months. "My health has deteriorated over the last months." He added that he must "now focus on my physical well-being". He said he was making the announcement with "a combination of pride and sadness" adding: "I have lived all my life in and through music, and I will continue to do so as long as my health allows me to."

Born in Argentina to Jewish parents, Barenboim rose to prominence as a prodigious young pianist, before moving <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-63142425>

## WEST-EASTERN DIVAN ORCHESTRA

The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra was conceived in 1999 inspired by the Argentinean-Israeli musician Daniel Barenboim and the late Palestinian professor Edward Said. It started as a music workshop where young musicians from Israel and the Arab countries of the Middle East could develop their musical skills in an environment of coexistence and cultural enrichment. Today, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra has become an international model on the defence of values such as peace and tolerance through the universal language of music.

The first editions of the West-Eastern Divan workshop took place in Weimar (1999) and Chicago (2000 and 2001). In 2002, the Orchestra found a home in Seville, thanks to the support of the Regional Government of Andalusia. Since then, Spanish musicians are part of the project, which has already performed in over 25 countries, including in all the Andalusian cities. During the music workshops, the young Arab, Israeli and Spanish musicians participate in intensive work programmes, developing their music skills and sharing scores, dining halls and, above all, their passion for music.

<https://barenboim-said.org/en/west-eastern-divan-orchestra/>

## CARDINAL TELLS PM: NO VALID REASON TO MOVE BRITISH EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM

6 October 2022: Cardinal Vincent Nichols has written to Prime Minister Liz Truss to express his 'profound concern' after it was announced that the PM told her Israeli counterpart Yair Lapid that she is reviewing the location of the British Embassy in Israel.

The suggestion is that the review will consider moving the embassy from Tel Aviv, where almost all other countries have their embassies, to Jerusalem, a move that the Cardinal says "would be seriously damaging to any possibility of lasting peace in the region and to the international reputation of the United Kingdom."

The Cardinal also adds his voice to that of Pope Francis and Christian leaders in the Holy Land, saying: "Pope Francis and the leaders of churches in the Holy Land have long called for the international Status Quo on Jerusalem to be upheld, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. The city must be shared as a common patrimony, never becoming an exclusive monopoly of any party."

Expressing his view that there is no valid reason to move the embassy, the Cardinal asks the Prime Minister "earnestly to reconsider the intention you have expressed and to focus all efforts on seeking a two-state solution, in which Jerusalem would have a guaranteed special status." <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/45639>

to Israel as a teenager and going on to become a leading conductor. He married the British cellist Jacqueline du Pré in Jerusalem in 1967, converting to Judaism. Following her death, he married the Russian pianist Elena Bashkirova.

After becoming general musical director at Berlin's State Opera in 1992, Barenboim went on to co-create the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, alongside Palestinian-American intellectual Edward Said, to promote co-operation among young musicians from Israel and Arab nations. In 2011, he received an honorary knighthood - the highest honour for foreign citizens - in recognition of his work towards reconciliation in the Middle East through music. As well as having Israeli citizenship, he accepted honorary Palestinian citizenship in 2008.

The West-Eastern Divan is not only a musical project, but also a forum for dialogue and reflection on the Arab-Israeli problem. The cross-cultural contacts made by the musicians during the orchestral workshops, symbolize how political and cultural differences could be overcome between the countries represented in the orchestra.

Unfortunately, music alone will not solve the highly complex conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. However, in the Barenboim-Said Foundation we strongly believe that music is a powerful tool for breaking down barriers previously considered insurmountable. This project thus demonstrates that an understanding between countries which have historically been enemies is possible.

"We aspire to total freedom and equality between Israelis and Palestinians, and it is on this basis that we come together to play music."

- **Statement of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra musicians, 2009.**

## WCC WELCOMES NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AWARD TO HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES FROM BELARUS, RUSSIA, AND UKRAINE

7 October 2022: The World Council of Churches (WCC) welcomed the news that the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to jailed Belarusian advocate Ales Bialiatski, Russian human rights organization Memorial, and the Ukrainian Centre for Civil Liberties. The new laureates were honoured for “an outstanding effort to document war crimes, human rights abuses and the abuse of power” in their respective countries, the Nobel Committee said. “They have for many years promoted the right to criticise power and protect the fundamental rights of citizens.”

Peter Prove, WCC director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, reflected that, in situations of conflict and oppression, the space for civil society engagement and action for human rights is often one of the first casualties. “I therefore welcome the award of the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize to Ales Bialiatski, Memorial, and the Centre for Civil Liberties, as an important recognition of the critical importance of maintaining and protecting the space for civil society actors for human rights, especially in such difficult situations,” he said. “We call on our member churches and partners everywhere to support and encourage the work of human rights defenders, to recognize and address the experience of the victims of human rights violations around the world, including especially in situations of violent conflict.”

Prove recalled the message, “Strengthening Christian Commitment to Human Dignity and Human Rights,” from an ecumenical conference held in Wuppertal and online in April 2022. “The message states that we are called ‘to listen to the victims of human rights violations and stand in solidarity with them’, and to collaborate ecumenically to strengthen those who face attacks because they advocate for victims of human rights violations,” said Prove.

<https://www.oikoumene.org/news/wcc-welcomes-nobel-peace-prize-award-to-human-rights-advocates-from-belarus-russia-and-ukraine>

## COOL PLACES OF WORSHIP EVENING MEETING HEATING & ENERGY WORKSHOP

Date: 21 October 2022 6.30-8. 30p.m

Venue: St Saviours Church (Parish Centre), 30 Bidston Road, Prenton CH43 2JZ

We are holding an evening, in person meeting to bring together local councillors, community groups, places of worship and their eco teams to look at the issue of Heating & Energy with a focus on how we can support those in our community to access support, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and reducing energy bill. We will also be discussing the cool places of worship programme, share resources and information, and look at how we may work together in the future.

Please email [zarah@faiths4change.org.uk](mailto:zarah@faiths4change.org.uk) or book via this link: <https://bit.ly/CWHeatingworkshop> so we can plan refreshments. Zarah Ross Faith and Climate Coordinator | Faiths4Change (Work days Monday, Tuesday & Thursday)

### Agenda

6.30 Arrival & refreshments

6.45 St Saviours- Welcome & Introduction to our Eco Journey

7.00 Supporting people to keep warm and reduce their energy use – shorts talks and discussions

- How we can make low/nil cost changes to our homes and places of worship to make them warmer or more energy efficient

- Energy Projects Plus to look at what support is out there for Wirral residents & how places of Worship could become referral agencies (if that is what they want to do)

- Involve Northwest – Winter Warm Hubs, and how to access other support in Wirral (The Wirral Info bank)

- Insulation & Energy Grants

8.00 Cool Places of Worship

8.30 Finish

Breaking Bread together/Sharing food – We will be serving vegetarian & Vegan soup and bread at the event. All the food prepared with be following LOAF principles or come from Zero Waste.

### LOAF Principles:

Locally produced,

Organically grown,

Animal friendly,

Fairly traded.

The #WorldFoodCrisis is a lot to take in. Millions of families around the world are facing a food crisis that could be worse than any we’ve ever lived through. @CAFOD have shared these five simple facts to help you understand the world food crisis.

<https://cafod.org.uk/News/International-news/World-food-crisis-five-facts>

## DIARY OCTOBER

**13 World Day of Prayer preparation day** Liverpool More details: <https://www.wwdp.org.uk/preparation-days/>

**14 CAFOD QUIZ** in Our Lady's Parish Centre Ellesmere Port starting at 7.30pm. As usual there will be a raffle with good prizes and entry is still only £3 -contact Tony Walsh 0151 355 6419

**15 World Day of Prayer preparation day** Preston. **15 LIVING IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST'S PEACE: Exploring the Gospel Non-Violence'** Pax Christi Day in Liverpool Organised by Merseyside Pax Christi. Please bring food for a shared lunch; tea/coffee are provided Suggested offering £10 or £5 unwaged. Venue: Irenaeus Centre, 32 Great Georges Rd L22 1RD (nearest station: Waterloo on Merseyrail) For information and booking contact Jan Harper 07591 082195 [janharper1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janharper1@yahoo.co.uk)

**16 NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT NOT NUCLEAR WAR! CND** public conference for discussion and debate (see 8 Oct above)

**16-23 Week of Prayer for World Peace** <https://weekofprayerforworldpeace.co.uk/> Annual Gathering will again this year only be on line. This is to allow as many as possible to participate. Sunday, 16 October at 3:30pm. Zoom link is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82952967543?pwd=bmJWSzA3U1d3ZzVocDlzbkQ5K3dTz09>

Meeting ID: 829 5296 7543 Passcode: 549956

**17-23 Challenge Poverty Week England and Wales** - an opportunity to highlight the incredible work being done by community groups around the country, and to show what can and must be done differently. It's an opportunity for voices that are often ignored to be heard loud and clear. It's a chance to focus attention on the need to tackle poverty – and to show the immense difference we could make to our society if we do.

<https://challengepoverty.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Challenge-Poverty-Week-England-Wales-2022-toolkit.pdf>

## NOVEMBER

**8 'The Impacts of Climate change on Migration'** talk by Paul Tacon CWDF Forum meeting. Paul works in the Migration Team based at the Geneva head-quarters of the International Labour Organisation. He will talk on zoom. This meeting will be in conjunction with the University of Chester Department of Social and Political Science, and will be held on the university campus at 7pm. Details of the venue will be confirmed later. Contact Ann McCarthy [mccarthyj@talktalk.net](mailto:mccarthyj@talktalk.net)

**7 -18 COP27** in Sharm al-Sheikh, Egypt

**8 11am - 4pm Churches Together in Britain and Ireland *Life Beyond Borders*** free event exploring the local, national and international implications of borders on communities 11am-4pm Liverpool Hope University Eden Building, Hope Park Campus Childwall Liverpool L16 9JD. Full details of this day including the event programme can be found on the CTBI website: <https://ctbi.org.uk/life-beyond-borders-8-november-2022/>

Book via Eventbrite: [https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/life-beyond-borders-conference-and-networking-event-tickets-384543519017?aff=CTBInewsletter&ct=t\(CTBI Monthly Newsletter-July22\)](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/life-beyond-borders-conference-and-networking-event-tickets-384543519017?aff=CTBInewsletter&ct=t(CTBI%20Monthly%20Newsletter-July22))

**12 NJPN Open Networking Day** - London/South East tbc [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk)

**9 Finish of Walk 2COP27**

**18 CAFOD QUIZ** (see October 14)

● **Read the Autumn issue of *MouthPeace* the quarterly online newsletter for Shrewsbury, Liverpool and Lancaster dioceses** <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/cms/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Mouthpeace-Autumn-2022.pdf>

● **Read NJPN's weekly column** online on Independent Catholic News [www.indcatholicnews.com](http://www.indcatholicnews.com) or find articles be uploaded onto our website at [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk)

● Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News [www.indcatholicnews.com](http://www.indcatholicnews.com) an invaluable free resources for up-to-date J&P news, events and in-depth articles.

● **Sign up** for regular news and information from NJPN including a **new fortnightly e-bulletin with a comprehensive round-up of current events, campaigns, e-petitions and resources** (plus copies of this newsletter & back issues for NJPN North West) at [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk) or contact [ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org](mailto:ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org) or [admin@justice-and-peace.org](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org) 020 7901 4864

*The views expressed in this bulletin are not necessarily those of NJPN*