



**PLAN B**



**Press Release: High Court rules against Young People**



For the second time in two days, the British Courts have demonstrated their complicity in the UK Government's blatant disregard for the 1.5°C Paris temperature limit, despite the scientific consensus that maintaining that limit is the vital lifeline for humanity - in particular for the younger generation and the Global South.

Yesterday, the [Supreme Court ruled](#) that evidence that the Government had concealed from the public the fact that Heathrow expansion would cause the 1.5°C limit to be breached, did not justify the breaking of a court embargo, even if that breach served to shine a spotlight on the Government's dishonesty.

Today, the High Court ruled that the case brought by three young people of the Global Majority and Plan B, which advances the modest proposition that the Government has a positive legal obligation under the Human Rights Act 1998 to take practical and effective to align action to the 1.5°C limit, is "unarguable" on the grounds (among others) that:

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**“the Claimants are using compliance with the Paris Temperature Limit as a test for compliance with Article 2 (and Article 8) [the rights to life and to family life]. The effect is that the Court is being asked to enforce the Paris Agreement, contrary to the guidance in [the Supreme Court decision of SC’].” [judgment para 53]**

The Claimants had presented the Court with uncontested evidence that the Bank of England and the FTSE100 are knowingly financing between [3-4°C warming](#) which, according to the scientific consensus, would mean loss of human life and displacement on an unimaginable scale.

According to the logic of the British Courts, however, it is not proper to use the Paris 1.5°C limit as a benchmark for what the Government ought to be doing, because to do so would fall foul of the Supreme Court’s decision in SC.

The Court acknowledged the evidence that:

**“The CCC’s report, “The Road to Net-zero Finance”, which stated that “a more systematic approach to financing is now needed”, read in conjunction with comments by the Bank of England and others suggesting that without changes to global finance, the world may be on track for a temperature increase in the region of 3.5°C above preindustrial levels by 2100” [judgment para 28(8)]**

It also noted the uncontested evidence before it that the City of London supports around 15% of global carbon emissions:

**“[The Claimants] point out that it has been estimated (by Carbon Tracker, an independent financial thinktank) that the City of London supports around 15% of global carbon emissions”. [judgment para 45]**

And evidence that:

**“The CCC’s Progress Report to Parliament published in June 2020 which stated that “UK plans have failed to prepare for even the minimum climate risks faced ...”.” [judgment para 28(7)]**

Nevertheless, the Court held there was no arguable case that the Government has a legal obligation to address the consequent threat to the public, including to the Claimants, who are exposed to disproportionate and discriminatory risk.

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<sup>1</sup> R (SC) v Work and Pensions Secretary [2021] UKSC 26  
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The Claimants will appeal the ruling to the Court of Appeal. They have 7 days to file their Grounds of Appeal.

Tim Crosland, Director of Plan B and one of the Claimants in the case, said:

**“We are all witness to the devastating impacts of the current level of 1.2°C warming: deadly famines in Madagascar, East Africa and Afghanistan; wildfires and floods devastating communities and ecosystems around the world, including in the UK. Meanwhile the City of London continues to profiteer from financing a trajectory towards 3-4°C warming, which is terrorism for the younger generation and terrorism for the Global South. Yet, the High Court has ruled that we cannot use the 1.5°C Paris limit as the benchmark for the UK Government’s legal obligation to safeguard life, despite the scientific and political consensus that maintaining that limit is vital to safeguard life. Given the UK Government’s grand-standing over 1.5°C through COP26, the public will understand that for the legal sophistry that it is. If the courts are bound to ignore the scientific evidence of what is needed to safeguard life, then ‘the right to life’ is no more than an illusion in a political economy which privileges the safety of short-term corporate profit over the welfare of ordinary people. We’ll appeal to the Court of Appeal and, from there, to the European Court of Human Rights.”**

Kobina J Amokwandoh, co-claimant and co-coordinator of the [Global Majority Vs. Campaign](#) said:

**“These are the same courts that have legalised lynchings, the enslavement of Afrikans and Europeans alike, and remained complicit in so many crimes. Violations of human rights in spite of the evidence are continuing to be legalised. The courts are making themselves obsolete, and empowering our alternatives, glocal youth tribunals for community self-empowerment.”**

**For further info:**

[High court judgment in full](#)

[Young People vs UK Government](#)

[Letter from Sir David King and 100+ others to UK Supreme Court](#)

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