



Edward Davey MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Energy and Climate Change  
3 Whitehall Place  
London  
SW1A 2AW

UN Association of the UK  
3 Whitehall Court  
London SW1A 2EL

T: +44 (0) 20 7766 3454  
F: +44 (0) 20 7930 5893  
E: [mulligan@una.org.uk](mailto:mulligan@una.org.uk)  
W: [www.una.org.uk](http://www.una.org.uk)  
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Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing to you on behalf of the United Nations Association of the UK (UNA-UK) and our thousands of members and supporters, to urge you to set ambitious targets for clean energy generation at a time when the government is developing a new 20-year plan for the UK's energy system as part of the draft Energy Bill.

At the recent Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the agreed outcome document of the conference, which the UK supported, stated:

We acknowledge that climate change is a cross-cutting and persistent crisis and express our concern that the scale and gravity of the negative impacts of climate change affect all countries and undermine the ability of all countries, in particular, developing countries, to achieve sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals and threaten the viability and survival of nations. Therefore we underscore that combating climate change requires urgent and ambitious action, in accordance with the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

It is your duty to now ensure the UK takes such urgent and ambitious action and one area in which this could be demonstrated is that of energy generation. Currently most of the UK's electricity generation comes from high-carbon sources. This means that on average 513 grams of carbon are emitted for every unit of electricity generated. However, by taking bold steps now the government could establish policy incentives and frameworks that could lower the average carbon emission from electricity generation to just 50 grams by 2030. Such measures will be necessary, according to the government's own advisors, if the UK is to hit legally-binding national climate targets. The current wording in the draft Energy Bill to "largely" decarbonise the power sector by "the 2030s" is too vague to ensure appropriate investment is made and risks are managed without imposing unnecessary costs on consumers. This wording needs to be made clearer and stronger.

The cheapest way for the UK to meet its future energy needs is through energy saving so that less energy needs to be generated in the first place. The draft Energy Bill should be amended so that it includes a greater emphasis on supporting energy efficiency. The draft Bill should also be changed so that there is also explicit support for low-carbon community energy generation schemes. Currently there is a danger that small providers will be marginalised and disadvantaged.

Your department has a once-in-a-generation chance to ensure a cleaner power supply for everyone and voters will not hesitate to judge how responsibly the government acts at this crucial time. The UK has already played a pioneering role in climate policy, being the first country to introduce a legally-binding Climate Change Act. Such leadership should now be continued as the government sets out plans for the future of energy generation.

I would be most grateful for a response that I can share with UNA-UK's members and supporters to indicate how seriously the government takes its responsibilities in meeting climate change obligations for future generations.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Phil Mulligan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long tail on the final letter.

Phil Mulligan  
Executive Director, UNA-UK