

Zurich police remove 200 climate activists blocking banks over fossil fuel funding

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Climate activists block an entrance of UBS to protest against big banks' financing of fossil fuel projects that damage the environment in Zurich, Germany. Words read: " Break the power of the banks and corporations!" © Schweiz Rise Up For Change/Handout via REUTERS

Zurich, August 2 (RHC)-- Police have started removing around 200 climate activists who staged a protest at the entrance to banks Credit Suisse and UBS in Zurich demanding the financial institutions stop financing fossil fuel projects.

On Monday morning, police were deployed to the Paradeplatz square in the Swiss financial hub of Zurich as Credit Suisse and UBS bankers found entry to their offices blocked by climate protesters. Local media suggests as many as 200 activists were involved in the demonstrations.

Chanting and singing protesters were led away by police after they refused to disperse. A sizable police presence has been observed in the city center square. Local media claims that the activists arrived around 6am local time (4am GMT) and set up camp at the entrances to the major banking offices. One banner read "Break the powers of the banks and corporations" while another called on the groups to abandon their commitments to the oil and gas industry.

In statements shared online and on social media, the Swiss climate justice movement called on the banks to refrain from funding fossil fuel industries. "Credit Suisse and UBS have so far done anything but respond adequately to the climate crisis," Frida Kohlmann, spokesperson for the Rise Up for Change group, said in a statement.

Last week, activists stood outside Credit Suisse's headquarters posing as bank staff and informed people that the institution had stopped its fossil fuel financing. Switzerland has seen its fair share of climate activism in recent years as experts say the country's climate is warming at twice the global average.

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