

British court hands 4- and 5-year prison sentences to climate activists for planning nonviolent protest



London, July 20 (RHC)-- A British court has sentenced five climate activists to record four- and five-year prison terms for participating in a Zoom call to plan a peaceful protest on a major London highway in 2022.

The activists, who are with the direct action group Just Stop Oil, were convicted of “conspiracy to cause a public nuisance” in a case which has triggered widespread outrage. Michel Forst, the U.N. special rapporteur on environmental defenders, warned: “This sentence should shock the conscience of any member of the public.”

Meanwhile, Greenpeace UK said: “We’re giving a free hand to the polluting elite robbing us of a habitable planet while jailing those who’re trying to stop them.”

Outside of the London courthouse, protesters gathered to support the activists, who have become known as the “Whole Truth Five,” as a van carted them off to prison. Just Stop Oil spokesperson Grahame Buss said: “We clearly do not live in a functioning democracy. A functioning democracy would be one in which we could act, in which we could make a change, in which we would be allowed to protest.

The nonfunctioning democracy that we have is one in which oil companies and very wealthy people determine what our laws are, in which we get the chance to vote once every five years and it makes no bloody difference at all, where we see governments — a new government coming in with virtually the same policies as the one that went out. How can you talk about a functioning democracy when we are in a climate collapse and our government is not recognizing it and not protecting us? It’s absolutely disgraceful. It has to stop.”

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