

UN chief warns world on one way ticket to disaster over climate

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Antonio Guterres says he is ‘very concerned’ upcoming COP26 in Glasgow will fail.

United Nations, October 22 (RHC)-- United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said the world’s current climate situation is “a one-way ticket to disaster,” reiterating the urgency of agreement at

the COP26 climate conference at the end of the month.

The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, struck at the COP21 summit, called for global warming to be capped at well below two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above the pre-industrial level, and ideally closer to 1.5C (2.7F). But current UN estimates indicate a “catastrophic” warming of 2.7C (4.8F) is on the cards.

Guterres said on Thursday that such an increase was “obviously a one-way ticket for disaster.” “The carbon pollution of a handful of countries has brought humanity to its knees and they bear the greatest responsibility,” he told an online press conference with members of the Covering Climate Now international project.

“I hope we are still on time to avoid a failure in Glasgow, but time is running short, and things are getting more difficult and that is why I’m very very worried. I’m afraid things might go wrong,” he said.

The Glasgow summit begins on October 31 and is seen as crucial for agreeing on worldwide emission targets that will slow global heating.

The Group of 20, which includes the world’s biggest economies, is due to meet in Italy on October 30, but leaders are said to be divided over phasing out coal and committing to the 1.5C target.

Earlier this month, COP26 President Alok Sharma, said the G20 meeting would be “make or break” for success in Glasgow.

“The G20 leaders will meet in Rome and they know their economies are responsible for four-fifths of planet carbon pollution,” Guterres said. “If they do not stand up ... we are headed for terrible human sufferings,” he added. He said: “China and the United States must do more than what they have announced so far.”

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