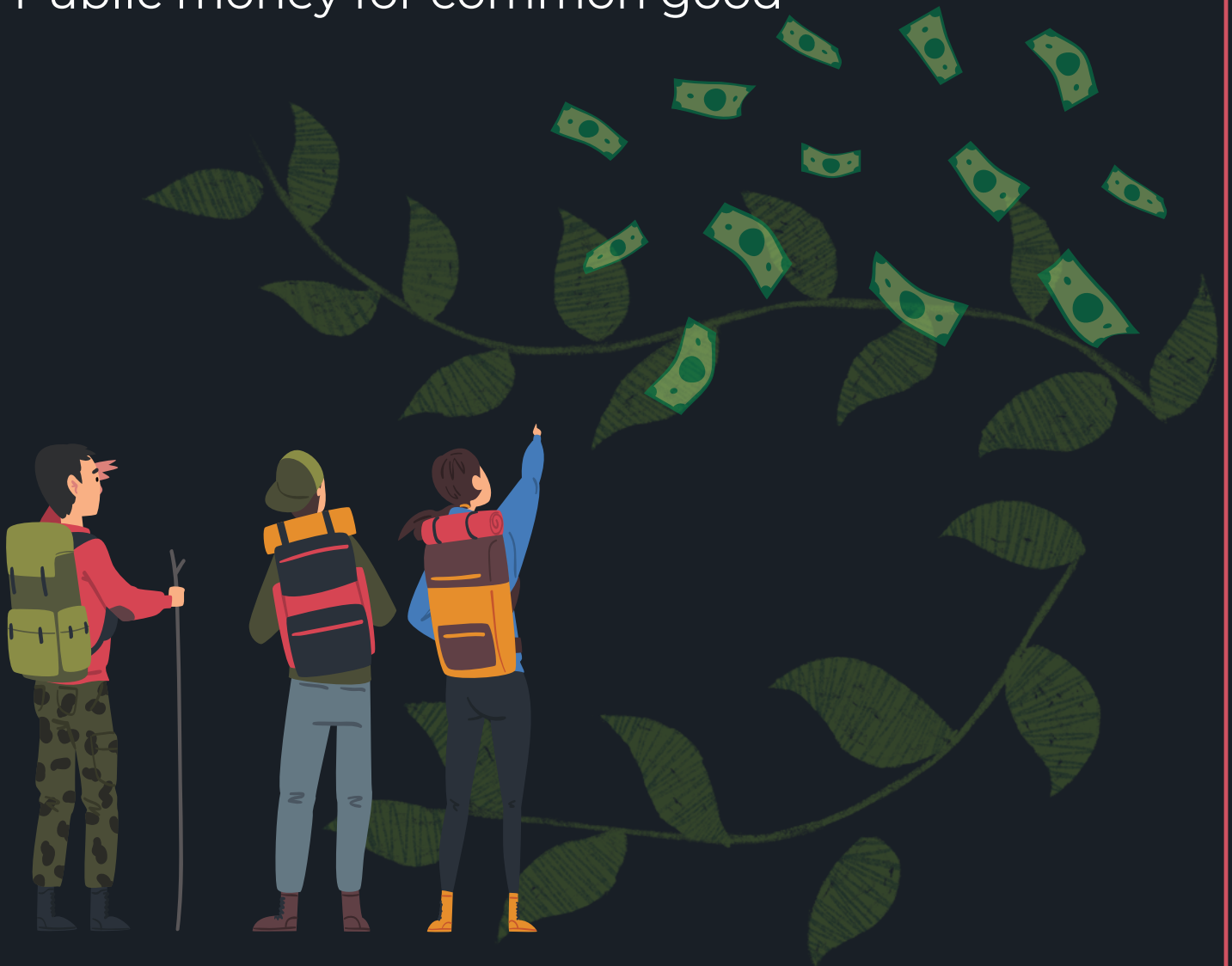




YOUTH CALL TO ACTION

'Public money for common good'



UKYCC YOUTH CALL TO ACTION

The UK government spends around £1.2 trillion each year, and a significant portion of this public money is actively contributing to the interconnected crises facing people and planet. From subsidies for polluters and profiteers, to massive spending on military violence and hostile borders, private profits and exploitation are being prioritised over economic, social, and environmental justice.

Years of austerity brought about the 'systemic immiseration of millions across Great Britain', per the United Nations; our military and migration policies have contributed directly to a genocide in Palestine, and the deaths of hundreds of asylum seekers; and we continue to subsidise fossil fuel companies to the tune of £13.6 billion each year. These decisions are often rationalised in terms of security and 'fiscal responsibility', but for young people it is clear that the government of today is only fuelling the fires that we will have to fight.

We call on those in power to commit to public money for common good - investing in solutions that can advance our collective wellbeing, both now and in future; and divesting from drivers of deprivation and destruction, and upholding International Human Rights in the UK and around the world.

Achieving this requires not just a change in policy, but a transformation in how this country is governed:

1. Decision-making frameworks for the common good

From national to local level, authorities must align spending with the needs of people and planet, to ensure divestment from harmful industries such as fossil fuels and arms dealing, and investment into essential services, from healthcare and housing to food and energy.

- Integrate social and environmental justice into all spending decisions; these priorities must be integrated into any fiscal frameworks, and actively upheld by the Treasury and Office for Budget Responsibility.
- Shift the Bank of England's remit to put social and environmental justice on equal footing with other economic priorities.

- Ensure that social value principles are built into planning (including housing and transport) and procurement processes, including through social licensing for providers.
- Pass a Future Generations Act requiring public bodies to integrate the rights and needs of current and future generations into decision-making processes.

2. Participatory governance, putting people at the heart of the economy

The clearest route to advancing the common good is putting power and ownership in the hands of those closest to the problem. This means devolution of economic powers and diversification of ownership models, as well as including affected communities in national-level decision-making.

- Guarantee representation (not just consultation) of affected communities, including youth, in decision-making frameworks on policy and spending, both locally and nationally.
- Promote public and community ownership of economic assets - from nationalisation of public goods and services, to legislation advancing Community Wealth Building.
- Deliver national and regional investment in community-led solutions, including co-operatives and social enterprises, that can tackle economic and environmental crises in parallel.
- Advance new models for deliberative democracy, such as citizens' assemblies and participatory budgeting.

3. Stop Funding Genocide:

Right now, nowhere in Gaza is safe and we can not be silent in the face of an unfolding genocide. The UKYCC expresses our deepest grief for the loss of thousands of innocent lives through the illegal blockade and sustained military violence by Israel in Palestine. Our hearts are also with the Israeli civilians and families whose loved ones have been killed, including in the attacks by Hamas.

The horrors we have witnessed in Gaza over the past 8 months are deeply rooted in oppression, colonialism, historic injustice, and capitalism. From the Balfour Declaration to modern day arms trade, the UK Government along with the United States, Israel and other colonial powers have played a key role in the establishment of Palestine's territorial occupation, decades of fragmentation, segregation, discrimination, and deprivation, and the crime against humanity of apartheid.

The UKYCC fights hard to uphold its commitments to climate and social justice, collective action and non-violence. We emphasise that there can be no climate justice without human rights. We therefore join the international community in calling for the UK Government to:

- Demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza,
- Urgently stop selling arms to Israel, and comply with International Law to prevent genocide
- Demand a release of all hostages,
- Condemn Israel for its invasion and occupation of Palestine and hold Israel accountable for its war crimes
- Urge the international community to take urgent and decisive action to ensure that Israel complies with all of the precautionary measures required by the International Court of Justice, including provision of humanitarian aid and supplies, and an end to the illegal occupation and air, land and sea blockade of Gaza.
- Reaffirm its respect for international humanitarian and human rights laws
- Redirect arms spending to mobilise climate finance to Global South countries.

We believe that taking action now to stop genocide in Gaza serves as a litmus test for the UK and other Global North countries to respect and uphold International Human Rights, instead of continuing to fund, fuel and prolong war, genocide and climate chaos. At the heart of many global human rights violations lies oppression and exploitation of human and natural resources. From Gaza's offshore gas, and child labour in cobalt mines in Congo, to genocide in Sudan and Tigray. By standing strong as an international community, we call out this hypocrisy of Global North Countries, and know that these asks will help us to work towards collective liberation.

Public money for common good is not an end goal, but a means through which we can transform every sector of society for the better. People and planet are not incidental to the economy, we are the economy, and it only works if it works for us - today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

