



September 3rd, 2020

Greetings friends. And thank you to my friend Minister Koizumi. Your leadership on climate and energy continues to be an important influence on the global discussion of how we address these challenges today – and in the years ahead.

I'm sorry to not be with you in person, but I'm happy to have the opportunity to provide this written message of support.

There's no doubt the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to have tragic health and economic impacts – and science and coordinated action around the world will lead us out of this crisis. Yet even as we manage through the current challenges, we know we need to act now to address the next global crisis: climate change. Although rising temperatures and increasing greenhouse gas emissions can seem like a problem of the distant future, the only way to avoid the worst possible outcome is to accelerate our efforts now.

We need a rapid technological transition to speed the development of clean technologies and innovative solutions to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by mid-century, before it's too late. And Japan can play a key role in marshalling the leadership and political commitment we need to build the industries and companies of the future.

While projections for emission reductions during the current pandemic are not wrong, the reality is that they are not sufficient or sustainable to fight against climate change. Unless we start right now, the damage inflicted by climate change will exceed COVID-19 – and the loss of life and economic misery will continue for much longer.

The good news is we can learn the lessons of COVID-19, including the need to act quickly, to follow the science, and to work together to ensure the solutions we develop help the poorest countries as well as the richest. The way we respond to this crisis can inform how we take on climate change.

Above all, we should let innovation lead the way in creating new tools and solutions that are accessible for the entire world. I am grateful that Japan is focusing on achieving a future with fewer greenhouse gas emissions to prepare for the impending global crisis.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Gates".

Bill Gates