

15 August 2023

PRESS RELEASE

Secretary John Kerry, US Special Envoy for Climate, to Address the World

on

The Climate Crisis

at the

The Signet Library during the height of this year's Edinburgh Festivals

The Story

It is with great pleasure that Beyond Borders Scotland and the WS Society announce Secretary John Kerry, the United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, has accepted their invitation to deliver a Keynote Address on a topic of global concern at the Signet Library, Parliament Square, Edinburgh during the height of this year's Edinburgh festivals.

Secretary Kerry will deliver an Address entitled *The Climate Crisis* at 3.00 pm on 24 August 2023, when he will be introduced by the First Minister of Scotland, Humza Yousaf MSP. His address will then be livestreamed around the world.

The event will launch *Scottish Global Dialogues*, a new joint annual series of lectures organised by Beyond Borders Scotland and the WS Society, which aims to bring a figure of international standing to Edinburgh each year during the Edinburgh festivals to shine an important new policy lens and light on an issue of global concern.

Quotes

WS Society Chief Executive, Robert Pirrie WS, said:

'This series aims to promote non-partisan debate on international relations and global politics, in the interests of advancing citizenship and cultural exchange and is supported by the Scottish Government, Scottish Council on Global Affairs and a range of other Scottish academic and festival bodies. To have Secretary John Kerry give this inaugural lecture here is a great honour and entirely fitting. He embodies public service and climate change is an urgent global priority.'

Founder of Beyond Borders Scotland, Mark Muller Stuart KC, said:

'We are delighted that Secretary Kerry has accepted our invitation to come to Edinburgh at this critical junction in the climate crisis debate as we move ever closer towards COP28 in

the UAE. The world needs to find fresh inspiration and fast and his address could not have come at a more opportune moment.

Nor is it a coincidence that the Secretary is coming to Edinburgh when over a million festival goers are in the city. We believe the original purposes and global convening power of the Edinburgh festivals, along with the Scottish enlightenment heritage of the city, can help us to find that inspiration. We cannot think of a better global backdrop or more symbolic place from where to deliver such an important speech than here at the Signet Library, birthplace of the modern world.

We are all waiting in anticipation for what Secretary Kerry has to say about this existential crisis which we all face together wherever we live.'

This event is supported by the Scottish Government, the Scottish Council on Global Affairs, and a range of other Scottish academic, civil society and festival bodies.

First Minister Humza Yousaf said:

'We want Scotland to be a good global citizen and make a constructive contribution to addressing global challenges. There is no greater challenge than addressing the climate crisis and we are committed to working with our global partners to build on progress made since COP26 in Glasgow.

I am delighted that Special Representative Kerry has chosen Edinburgh during Festival season to deliver such an important intervention. The recent extreme weather experienced across the globe must serve as a stark reminder for all countries of the need to come together to accelerate climate action, as we look ahead to what will be a critical COP28 later this year.'

Please note admission to this event is by invitation but it will be livestreamed to allow wider participation. Joining details will be circulated in due course. It is anticipated that Secretary Kerry will hold a media gaggle or roundtable after the event. For further information please see contact details below.

Contacts for enquiries

For all media requests to interview Secretary Kerry and communication enquires please e-mail them climatecomms@state.gov..

For all media requests concerning First Minister, Humza Yousaf, MSP, please e-mail: Jack.Matthews@gov.scot

For enquires concerning the venue and access please contact:

The WS Society

The Signet Library

Parliament Square

EDINBURGH

EH1 1RF

0131 220 3249 | library@wssociety.co.uk

www.wssociety.co.uk

For media invites to the event and other enquiries please e-mail Beyond Borders Scotland at:
events@beyondbordersscotland.com
Telephone: 0131 290 2686 (Tuesdays 9.30am - 5.30pm)

For the full *Beyond Borders International Festival* Programme and Box Office go online to:
<https://bbintfest.com/>

A Further Note on Beyond Borders Scotland and the WS Society

BBS. Beyond Borders Scotland is a Scottish-based international cultural exchange and peacebuilding organisation which uses the art and the built and natural heritage of Scotland to help nations, groups and individuals involved in conflict to overcome their differences. It also seeks to promote *Scotland in the World and the World in Scotland* by hosting the *Beyond Borders International Festival* each August in the beautiful surroundings of Traquair House in the Scottish Borders, where a remarkable group of writers, broadcasters, artists, and cultural thought leaders come together with peacemakers, diplomats and states people from across the globe to share experiences and publicly discuss issues of interest and global concern. Beyond Borders is also responsible for devising and running the *Women in Conflict 1325 Fellowship Programme*, supported by the Scottish Government, and assisted by the United Nations, which has created a 350-strong network and community of female peace practitioners involved in peace processes around the world.

WS Society. The Society of Writers to His Majesty's Signet (known as the WS Society) is a Scottish charity (SC050987) and incorporated body of Scottish lawyers. The Society is one Scotland's oldest organisations for public benefit, with over 500 years of history. The Society owns and operates the Signet Library, a magnificent example of neo-classical architecture from the Enlightenment era, in the heart of Edinburgh. The Society's charitable purposes are the provision of education in the law and in legal professionalism, advancing the arts, culture and heritage through the Signet Library and its collections; and advancing equality and diversity, citizenship, community and charitable endeavour.