

Dear Prime Minister Sanna Marin,
Dear Minister for European Affairs and Ownership Steering Tytti Tuppurainen,
Dear Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Krista Mikkonen,

Today, June 5, is World Environment Day. It is a day, which seeks to raise awareness and generate action to protect the environment. It is also an occasion for the Finnish Government to take a clear stand and publicly denounce the Datteln 4 project.

Finland is a leading power in the climate struggle. With this comes a responsibility to the rest of the world to show integrity, indeed bravery, in the fight against climate and ecological breakdown. In pledging to become carbon-neutral by 2035, and to phase out coal within the country by 2029, the Finnish Government has seemingly worked hard to fulfil this responsibility. Yet there is a stark disconnect between Finland's internal climate governance and its dealings with fossil fuels beyond its borders.

Datteln 4 is the only new coal power plant in Western Europe. It is owned by German company Uniper SE, 73% of which is owned by Fortum, the Finnish power company that is itself 51%-owned by the Finnish Government. The plant has begun operations last week, on the 30th of May 2020, against the recommendation of the German Coal Commission, and in the face of widespread public dissent. This was made clear by the protests, which happened on Saturday and caught the attention of various media agencies from multiple countries in Europe.

If we want to meet the demands of the Paris Agreement, and to forestall global catastrophe, we must swiftly retire coal power plants, instead of building new ones. The message of Datteln 4 is disastrous, undermining Finland's claim to climate leadership, and reverberating globally. In failing to denounce and fight the activities of Datteln 4, the Finnish Government chooses to allow the continued destruction of the climate for a decade past the promised phase-out date for coal of 2029.

Due to its chain of ownership, Fortum, and, by extension, the Finnish Government, has an ever-larger role in the climate plans of its subsidiary, Uniper, which cannot currently be viewed as anything but folly with climate and ecological breakdown imminent.

This hypocritical disconnect between Finland's national climate governance and the actions abroad of Fortum is saddening, and failure to act now would constitute betrayal. Furthermore, in facilitating the operation of Datteln 4, the Finnish Government is not only indicating its official commitment in the fight against climate crisis to be hollow, but, despite being a rich and developed country at the forefront of the climate movement, it is forsaking its responsibility as a role-model for the rest of the world. If Finland continues to support coal, what implications does this hold for the climate goals of every other country, and the future of humanity?

Please, do the only responsible thing — denounce the operation of Datteln 4, and send a desperately needed message to Europe and the World: *The time for coal is over now.* Step up, and show that there are government leaders willing to do what is necessary to protect the future of their children in times where ecological tipping points are no longer speculation, but dangers at our very doorstep.

Ms. Marin, Mrs. Tuppurainen, Mrs. Mikkonen — stand on the right side of history, and stop Datteln 4.

Sincerely yours,

