

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

info@urban20.org

media@c40.org

communication@uclg.org

28 Cities Urge G20 to Invest in Green and Just Recovery, Vaccine Equity, Climate Action, and Divest from Fossil Fuels Ahead of G20 Summit in Italy and COP26.

Urban 20 calls upon G20 nations to foster greater collaboration with cities and local governments to accelerate solutions to the climate crisis, COVID-19, and the economic and social recovery

Rome, Italy (June 17, 2021) - Today, the Urban 20 (U20), led by Virginia Raggi, Mayor of Rome and Giuseppe Sala, Mayor of Milan, urged the Group of Twenty (G20) Leaders to deliver a green and just recovery from COVID-19, ensure global vaccine equity, strengthen local public service provision and expand collaboration with local governments to achieve an inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous future.

The U20's official communique, detailing cities' demands for national leaders, was signed by 28 cities.

With the majority of the world's population living in urban areas, cities will serve as the engines of a global green and just COVID-19 recovery. On the frontlines of the pandemic response, mayors and governors have championed bold, equitable solutions to the intersecting public health, economic, social and climate crises, though they often lack supplies, funding, and other means of support needed to reach these goals.

The pandemic has emphasized that health moves beyond just the health response and that strong public institutions and service provision are vital to protecting our communities and the planet.

Greater cooperation between national and local governments is needed to scale up solutions, sustain critical public service provisions, and ensure that no one - and no place - is left behind.

Inspired by the G20 Presidency's three pillars for action - People, Planet, and Prosperity - the U20 communique outlines cities' vision for a new sustainable development paradigm and the road towards a resilient recovery from the global humanitarian crisis precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically, the U20 Mayors and Governors ask the G20 leaders to guarantee the right to health for all by supporting strong public institutions and service provision, which are vital to the cohesion of our communities and to guaranteeing universal vaccine access equally for all. They call on the G20 to accelerate climate action ahead of COP26 by investing in halving global emissions by 2030 and shifting investments from fossil fuels to clean energy. Finally, the mayors are asking the G20 to increase equity and good governance, both by enabling cities to make the transition to a net zero economy, a just transition for all, as well as by protecting citizen's digital rights.

"I applaud the work of fellow U20 cities, that once more have demonstrated their clarity of vision and commitment to act for the future of our communities. The U20 Communiqué is built around G20 priorities 'People, Planet and Prosperity' in a way that shows how aligned cities' goals are to governments' ambitions: cities are governments' best allies towards a green and just recovery, and beyond. I am confident that the Italian G20 Presidency will take into high consideration the concrete and meaningful contributions of U20 cities to the G20 final statement."

- Mayor Giuseppe Sala of Milan

"The principles set out in the U20 Communiqué are a big step forward towards the creation of a just, resilient and sustainable society. We are very proud of this result achieved by the Italian Presidency of U20, and we are ready to contribute to the work of the G20 on basic issues for the future humanity."

- Mayor Virginia Raggi of Rome

The [U20 2021 Communiqué](#) was signed by the mayors and governors of the following 28 cities:

Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Bogota, Buenos Aires, Durban (eThekweni), Freetown, Glasgow, Helsinki, Istanbul, Izmir, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Lisbon, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Milan, Montreal, New York City, Osaka, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Rotterdam, Sao Paulo, Seoul and Tokyo.

Executive Summary of 2021 U20 Communiqué:

The communiqué calls upon G20 Heads of State and Governments to deliver a green and just recovery by:

- **Strengthening health systems and public services to ensure global and equitable access to vaccines**, especially for those living in cities within developing countries.
- **Fostering social cohesion and equity via:**
 - Guaranteeing social safety nets and equitable access to essential public services including housing, education and safe public transport.
 - Building cities of belonging which protect the most vulnerable, and those living and working in informality.
 - Promoting gender-inclusive policies and women's leadership.
 - Fighting structural racism, discrimination, harassment and sexism.
 - Investing in cultural life as a key pillar of sustainable development.
- **Investing in the core tenets of a green and just recovery, including:**
 - Ensuring all stimulus packages and plans invest in the green economy and a global transition to clean, renewable energy.
 - Ending public investments in high-carbon infrastructure.
 - Divesting from fossil fuels.
 - Supporting intermediary cities as catalysts for sustainable development and territorial cohesion.
 - Combatting energy poverty by ensuring that 40-50% of climate investments in retrofit technologies, sustainable public transit, the circular economy, and clean energy solutions directly benefit frontline, vulnerable, or marginalized communities.
- **Accelerating climate action ahead of COP26.** To set the stage for an ambitious COP26 later this year, U20 cities call upon the G20 to align their climate action plans behind the need to limit global heating to 1.5°C. In addition to placing inclusive, science-based action at the center of national decision-making, the U20 also encourages G20 leaders to:
 - Pledge to reach net-zero emissions in the 2040s or sooner.
 - Set an interim target to achieve within the next decade, reflecting a fair share of the 50% global CO₂ reduction identified by the IPCC.
 - Commit to 100% clean energy by 2040 or sooner.
 - Phase out internal combustion engines and achieve 100% zero-emissions vehicle sales no later than 2035.
 - Ensure new buildings operate at net-zero carbon by 2030.

- Renovate and retrofit all existing buildings to operate at net-zero carbon by 2050.
- Secure a financial package that supports developing countries in their efforts to achieve these ambitious climate goals.
- **Moving towards inclusive and prosperous societies, including:**
 - Adapting to the future of work and leverage a just energy transition to address rampant global inequality. A green and just recovery has the potential to create as many as 50 million sustainable jobs by the end of 2025 - a third more than a traditional, high-carbon recovery.
 - Scaling up fiscal decentralization and local financing mechanism to contribute to fiscal autonomy and secure revenue.
 - Elevating local decision-making and strengthen the direct involvement of all persons in decision-making spaces.
 - Bridging the digital divide and promoting and protecting digital rights as human rights.

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About U20

Urban 20 is a city diplomacy initiative that brings together cities from G20 member states under a common framework to discuss global economic, climate and development issues. The cities form a common position and issue recommendations for consideration by the G20 presidency and Heads of State, enhancing the role of cities as global economic and political leaders. The U20 initiative is permanently convened by C40 Cities and United Cities and Local Governments, under the leadership of a Chair city that rotates annually. The initiative is currently in its fourth and was previously Chaired by Buenos Aires (2018), Tokyo (2019), and Riyadh (2020).

About C40 Cities

C40 connects 97 of the world's largest and most influential cities, representing 700+ million citizens and one quarter of the global economy. Member cities use a science-based approach and exchange of best practices to take the urgent and effective action needed to confront the climate crisis and keep global heating below 1.5°C, aiming to collectively halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. C40 mayors are committed to increasing resilience, cleaning the air we breathe and taking inclusive climate action to create a healthier and more sustainable future.

About United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

UCLG is the world organization of local and regional governments and their associations, representing and defending their interests on the world stage. UCLG's membership serves 70% of the world's population and is present in all world regions. UCLG's key areas of political interest are: local democracy, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, local finance, urban development and city diplomacy in peace building.