



14 August 2019

H.E. Luis Alfonso de Alba
Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the 2019 Climate Action Summit
United Nations, New York

Dear Special Envoy de Alba,

This year, over 800 jurisdictions across 16 countries have declared climate emergencies. This unprecedented call for action by local, state and national governments echoes the Secretary-General's urgent call for leaders to bring transformative solutions to the Climate Summit in New York on September 23, 2019, to stop the increase in emissions by 2020 and dramatically reduce emissions to reach net-zero emissions by mid-century.

With the view to stimulate momentum to deliver on existing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and raise the level of ambition of these contributions by 2020, the Summit takes place at a key moment. It also offers an opportunity to address the climate emergency and galvanize cities, local governments and national governments in our call for enhanced multilevel climate action.

Cities have been at the forefront of climate action for many years and are now calling on Nations to match their ambition. Over 10,000 cities and local governments, representing more than 800 million people, have already pledged to contribute to the goals of the Paris Agreement by taking ambitious climate action through the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM) and other core GCoM partners. There is a long history of city commitment and action campaigns, and mayors and councilors have been and remain strong partners in advancing global climate ambition. **The GCoM 10,000 and the city networks that support them are strongly committed** to the goals of the upcoming Summit and are working actively with national government, private sector and civil society partners to deliver new initiatives that will allow for even greater and accelerated action at the local level.

As leaders of city networks, representing cities and local governments of all sizes from around the world, we see this year's United Nations Secretary General's Climate Action Summit as a critical platform to mobilize new partnerships, resources and actions that can save lives, motivate more ambitious national government commitments and should garner new resources to support new and existing subnational climate ambition in line with the Paris Agreement, the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

This year's Summit offers the tremendous opportunity to showcase the progress of cities and bring forward new opportunities and resources in buildings, transport, resilience for the urban

poor, and decentralized finance through the Infrastructure, Cities, and Local Action track to increase ambition and accelerate action. It is important to highlight at the Summit that most cities and local governments, especially small and intermediary cities particularly in the Global South, are working to meet targets more ambitious than those of national governments but without full authority or sufficient resources to fully realize ambition. There is a need for a strong call at the Summit for support for cities so they can scale action and can help national governments deliver on global commitments.

Many mayors and councilors are willing to do more to increase ambition in their communities, work toward a decarbonized world, and act on this climate emergency. This requires a multilevel collaborative and decentralized approach across all levels of government. A decentralized cooperation will contribute to adding value to learn from each other, develop action plans together, exchange on best practices and build expertise. It will only be possible if resources are mobilized and policies are reformed to help local governments realize their full ambition.

For this reason, the global city networks and the alliance of the *Global Covenant of Mayors 10,000* stand with you for the Summit, and specifically, will be championing the following among others:

- **City Commitments - Locally Determined Contributions:** To date, over 10,000 global cities have committed to take voluntary ambitious climate action to deliver their share of the Paris Agreement by registering their "Locally Determined Contributions," through the Global Covenant of Mayors – the single global alliance to collect, track, and regularly report progress on city commitments. These cities and local governments commit not only to action but to establish a plan to meet targets on climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience, and access to energy, including pledges to achieve net-zero emissions or climate neutrality by 2050, switching to zero-emission urban transport, net-zero carbon buildings, 100% renewable energy and zero waste by 2030, while ensuring that these transformations are equitable and leave no-one behind. If fully implemented, cities committed to GCoM could achieve annual reductions of 1.3 billion tons of CO₂ emissions per year by 2030. We would like to work with you to showcase the ambition of the *GCoM 10,000* at the Summit and show national governments the opportunity of integrating locally determined contributions into NDC enhancements and long-term strategies.
- **Platform for Cities & Local Governments:** As a Summit at the United Nations, this event uniquely positions Member States to exhibit leadership and partnership through new commitments. It is important that the role of cities and Mayors to date can be highlighted. We therefore plan to mobilize a representative delegation, who can participate and connect topics with the High-Level Political Forum and SDG Summit, and support Summit outcomes through a significant communications campaign. It is our hope that a platform can be provided for these cities and local governments to demonstrate their leadership to date and

further our collective call for action to leverage the work of cities to foster integrated partnerships and collaborative action across all actors and all levels of governments.

- **Coalition for Urban Transitions Global Report:** The Coalition for Urban Transitions (CUT), will release a new report, co-produced with over 50 leading organizations with support of the UK, German and Swedish governments and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, designed to give national governments evidence and confidence to commit to more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions, long term decarbonization strategies, and achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals by transforming cities worldwide. The report will outline a set of priority actions recommended for national governments, supported by over 5 years of analysis and groundbreaking new evidence showing that bold action on cities by national governments can create shared prosperity and address the climate crisis.
- **City Finance Climate Gap Fund:** Developed by the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the GCoM, the City Finance Climate Gap Fund (Gap Fund) will provide technical assistance and early-stage support to cities and local governments to develop project implementation concepts as part of their Climate Action Plans. The aim is to enable cities and local governments so they can advance for consideration by internal or external investors and financing agencies. The initiative will not only fill a critical gap for technical assistance in the project development cycle, but also enhance the impact of existing initiatives that focus on different phases of the project cycle (e.g. climate action planning, transaction) by complementing these activities and filling the early-stage gap. Ultimately, further work will be necessary to address the investment gap and enable direct access to finance for cities.

In our view, a successful Summit will highlight the recommendations to Member States from the CUT Report, catalyze public and private funding to support the launch of the Gap Fund, and connect the multitude of deliverables advancing across sectors to support existing sub-national commitments and allow for existing alliances, like the Global Covenant of Mayors and the 100+ partners it convenes at both the global and local levels, to be a pathway for delivery of technical assistance and other resources to support actors in their continued climate leadership, as well as contribute to the global climate advocacy at the UN Climate Change negotiations through the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency to the UNFCCC.

Securing prosperity for future generations will not be possible without action in cities and the collective effort, technical expertise and technological innovation of the public and private sectors.

We thank you for your continued leadership and look forward to working with you in the lead up to September.



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