PRESS RELEASE

Mayor of Medellín Federico Gutiérrez calls for Latin American cities to embrace zero emission transport and lead the world on climate action

Mayor Federico Gutiérrez hosts World Cities Summit in Medellín, and calls upon all Latin American cities to accelerate progress on air quality and zero emission transportation

Rio de Janeiro and Santiago announce commitment to procure only zero-emission buses from 2025 and ensure a major area of the city is zero emission by 2030, joining 26 other cities worldwide in the declaration

Medellín (10 July 2019) — At the World Cities Summit in Medellín today, Mayor Federico Gutiérrez called upon all Latin American cities to drive forward progress on sustainable transport and clean up the air for their citizens.

Mr Federico Gutiérrez, Mayor of Medellin, said:
“Our citizens have the right to breathe cleaner and healthier air. As mayors, we are entrusted with the responsibility to reduce pollutant emissions in our territories. This is an invitation to all Latin American cities to join us on this journey. So together, we implement zero-emissions transportation systems and strategies that lead us to a cleaner future.”

This call to action comes as Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Santiago, Chile announced their commitment to the C40 Green and Healthy Streets Declaration. The cities join 26 others including Medellín, Quito and Mexico City in committing to procure only zero-emission buses from 2025, ensure that a major area of the city is zero emission by 2030, and support walking and cycling. The policies are designed to fight air pollution, improve the quality of life for all citizens, and help take more climate action.

If all C40 cities meet the commitments of the Green & Healthy Streets Declaration and encourage more people out of their cars, it could prevent more than 45,000 premature deaths each year.

64 new electric buses will be on the streets of Medelliín by August 2019, creating the largest fleet of electric buses in Colombia.

Santiago is already a world leader in electric transport, now home to over 200 zero emissions buses on the streets of the Metropolitan Region and with 183 more due to be introduced in August.

In Rio, transport is responsible for one third of all greenhouse gas emissions and over 75% of the highly dangerous pollutants in the air that cause lung and heart
disease, early deaths and hospital admissions. Taking action on transport in Rio will vastly improve the public health of citizens and ensure their right to breathe clean air in the city.

Mark Watts, C40 Executive Director, said:
“Air pollution caused by petrol and diesel vehicles is responsible for the early deaths of millions of people in cities around the world. Emissions from these vehicles are also contributing to the climate crisis that threatens us all. By committing to deliver the Green and Healthy Streets for their citizens Medellín, Rio and Santiago are ensuring a healthier and more sustainable future for their citizens, and contributing to the global leadership of mayors in fighting climate breakdown.”

Karla Rubilar, Governor of Santiago, said:
“As Regional Government following the clear mandate and roadmap established by President Sebastián Piñera, in the Metropolitan Region we are promoting concrete measures to reduce emissions and to have fossil fuels free streets in our territory. We are driving the entrance of electromobility with a network of electric stations in a public-private association and municipal electric buses financed by our Metropolitan Government, which benefit our neighbors while taking care of the environment. Our public transport network grows every day with more electric buses and electro corridors, and includes the Metro which is already supplied largely with solar energy. Intelligent and new technologies allow implementation of waste to energy, without neglecting the circular economy, recycling and environmental education. Investments in infrastructure for the use of bicycles and other forms of transport provide the inhabitants of Santiago with easy alternatives to the car; just like that. From different perspectives with a common goal, we will all be able to fulfill our dream of a cleaner and more sustainable Metropolitan Region.”

Alongside the WCS, the City of Medellin in partnership with C40 Cities and Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI) will host a workshop for city officials to explore how cities can deliver sustainable mobility and zero emission areas in their cities.

C40 Cities is working with other Latin American cities to address climate change, including in Bogotá, where the C40 Cities Finance Facility is working with the city to create a brand new ‘Quinto Centenario’ Bikeway, stretching 25 km and supporting 34,000 bicycle trips during peak hours. Investment in cycling in Bogotá has resulted in more than 150,000 extra trips by bike every day in 2018. Over the past two years, the city’s network of bike lanes has increased by 80km.

- ENDS -

Notes:

About the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
Around the world, C40 Cities connects 96 of the world’s greatest cities to take bold climate action, leading the way towards a healthier and more sustainable future. Representing 700+ million citizens and one quarter of the global economy, mayors of the C40 cities are committed to delivering on the most ambitious goals of the Paris Agreement at the local level, as well as to cleaning the air we breathe. The current chair of C40 is Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo; and three-term Mayor of New York City Michael R. Bloomberg serves as President of the Board. C40’s work is made possible by our three strategic funders: Bloomberg Philanthropies, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), and Realdania.

To learn more about the work of C40 and our cities, please visit our website, or follow us on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.