

PRESS RELEASE

Invest in “green and just” recovery for cities, U20 urges G20 leaders

Urban 20 mayors call on G20 leaders to collaborate with local governments to deliver a green and just recovery and an inclusive, carbon-neutral future.

- U20 communiqué urges G20 to invest and collaborate with U20 in four critical key areas crucial to support sustainable urbanisation in the years ahead.
- Communiqué calls on G20 to commit and act “immediately to the climate emergency”.
- Communiqué urges G20 leaders to partner with local governments to accelerate progress toward a more equitable, sustainable and inclusive future for all.

Read the full 2020 Urban 20 Communiqué [here](#).

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, October 2020 – The Urban 20 (U20) today urged the Group of Twenty (G20) Leaders to invest in a “green and just” urban recovery strategy as it officially handed its communiqué to the G20 on the final day of the U20 Mayors Summit, held virtually from Riyadh.

As cities seek to recover from the disruption of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and forge sustainable, inclusive and naturally diverse living spaces for the more than 4 billion people that live in cities around the world, the U20’s asks for the world’s leaders will play a central role in the revitalisation and reimagining of urban spaces in the years ahead.

With the context that more than 68 per cent of the world’s population is set to live in cities by 2050, the U20’s 27-point communiqué emphasised a categorical imperative for G20 member states to ensure that national governments “must crucially invest directly in cities as the engines of the recovery by implementing global policy responses that address investments in physical and social infrastructure”.

Further, the communiqué calls on Heads of State and Governments of the G20 to work together in four main areas:

Partner by Investing in a Green and Just Post COVID-19 Recovery

- U20 cities call on the G20 to design green stimulus funding, corporate support, and other recovery funds to support the development of climate-resilient and inclusive societies and ensure this funding reaches the territorial levels and is reflected in International Financial Institutions (IFIs) lending.
- Investments should be made in cities’ social infrastructure, in particular health, education and public transport systems alongside sustainability priorities, specifically by investing in ‘shovel-ready’ carbon-neutral projects to generate green jobs and increase equitable participation in the labour force.
- U20 cities further ask national leaders to cooperate with us towards guaranteeing access to vaccines for the COVID-19 virus without discrimination of any kind and that technology and innovation equitably serve people during and following the COVID-19 recovery.

Safeguard our Planet through National & Local Collaboration

- U20 cities call on the G20 leaders to work together with cities to respond immediately to the climate

emergency by substantially reducing GHG emissions with the aim to collectively deliver the 50% global reduction required by 2030 and reaching carbon neutrality no later than 2050 - in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement and taking into account the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Special Report on 1.5 Degree of Global Warming.

- U20 cities also call on the G20 leaders to mainstream and strengthen the role and active participation of cities in the local implementation of international biodiversity, climate and sustainability goals - such as by investing in nature-based solutions and including cities in the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

Accelerate the Transition to a Circular, Carbon-neutral Economy

- U20 cities call upon the G20 to develop enabling environments to foster the circular economy and the implementation of the 4Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover), enhance the financial capacity of local governments in adopting circular economy initiatives as well as promote research and capacity building on resource use, and, with a specific focus on mobility, invest in carbon neutral, quality mobility systems to support sustainable and affordable zero-emission mass transit.
- U20 cities further call on G20 leaders to increase investment in renewables and adopt a universal right of access to urban sanitation and waste management and promote 'zero waste societies'.

Empower People to Deliver a More Equitable & Inclusive Future

- U20 cities call on G20 leaders to address equitable urban social safety nets and protection, growth of systems to ensure affordable and accessible housing, equal and quality education and employment opportunities for all, protection of all women from inequality and violence, and elimination of socioeconomic disparities between different ethnic groups.

The U20 Communique was signed by the following 39 cities: Abu Dhabi, Amman, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Columbia, Dammam, Dubai, Durban, Hartford, Helsinki, Houston, Istanbul, Izmir, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Lisbon, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Makkah, Mexico City, Miami, Milan, Montreal, Osaka, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Riyadh, Rome, Rotterdam, San Jose, Sao Paulo, Seoul, Strasbourg, Tegucigalpa, Tokyo and Tshwane.

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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 third year and was previously Chaired by Buenos Aires (2018) and Tokyo (2019).

City representatives are known as "Sherpas", a Nepalese word describing someone who prepares a route to the summit for colleagues. In the U20 context, Sherpas are senior city officials preparing the ground for their mayors at the Riyadh U20 Summit.

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 Government (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.