



Just Transition and the Energy Crisis

This joint statement puts forward a united front of **mayors, unions and businesses**, calling for government leadership on two crises urban residents and workers are facing in this current moment: **the climate crisis and spiralling energy prices.**

The next months could bring a long, cold, unjust and expensive winter to millions of people globally, suffering from unprecedented levels of energy poverty.

Energy poverty is a key challenge facing people living in cities in all regions, and one which risks exacerbating poverty and inequality by limiting access of the most vulnerable to lighting, cooling and refrigeration, clean cooking and heating. Cities often experience energy poverty due to issues such as size of populations, unstable and informal labour with low wages coupled with higher urban costs of living, varied types of building stock, lack of formal connection to viable energy networks and/or informal settlements being disconnected from basic service provision. This has been starkly worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic which has worsened inequalities and created insecurity for many people.

Being affected by energy poverty can have severe implications for vulnerable, low-income and marginalised groups on service access, health, wellbeing, social inclusion, economic opportunity and quality of life. Families should not need to choose between food and paying their energy bills.

The energy crisis we are experiencing today is a consequence of the failure to plan for, deliver and fund a secure and just transition to a decarbonized power sector.

While the causes of the energy crisis are different across the world, what is clear is that climate impacts, including longer winters, hotter summers and extreme weather events have played a role. We must accelerate climate action, including the decarbonisation of urban transport. At the same time, more severe climate impacts and a faster energy transition will demand efforts to make energy secure, affordable, clean, and reliable. The costs of these efforts cannot fall on the most vulnerable, marginalised and discriminated people of our societies.

Working together, we will prioritise ensuring that everyone living in our cities, especially the poor and marginalised, will have access to affordable clean energy and the means to live thriving lives. We also reinforce our commitment to intensifying our efforts to support a just transition to a net zero and

inclusive economy, a commitment we made through the [Business Pledge for Just Transition and Decent Jobs](#) and the [Cities and Unions Call to Action for a Climate Decade for Good Quality Jobs](#).

Together and individually we are already taking action in cities and beyond. This includes providing support to the most vulnerable citizens to cope with rising costs, improving access to decent housing, ensuring existing homes are more affordable and energy bills are lower. It includes making cities more liveable through retrofitting buildings, expanding municipal power provision to improve affordable and renewable energy access, investing in measures that diversify energy mixes and ensure resilience from extreme weather, and working together to find solutions so that consumers, especially the most marginalised, are protected from price shocks or disconnections.

As this moment requires collective action, **we call on national governments to join us in taking action to ensure citizens and residents do not see inequalities exacerbated due to this current energy crisis, or by future transition policy, by:**

- **Releasing safety net plans** for low income and vulnerable households through to 2023 and plans for equitable and inclusive access to energy within the energy transition
- **Moving forward on climate action**, not back, and accelerating a just transition towards a fully decarbonized energy system that provides affordable, reliable, renewable and clean energy for all while creating decent and inclusive jobs at scale
- **Undertaking energy efficiency measures** such as programs to deeply retrofit social, public and low-income housing, reducing energy demand and lowering energy bills, while creating quality and new skilled jobs, especially for low-income and marginalized communities
- **Investing in local services deployed by cities**, including municipal, distributed, and community-based energy, to tackle energy poverty and assist families and hard to reach groups
- **Ensuring support for and investment in a just transition in cities** as per recommendations put forward by the [Call to Action for a Climate Decade for Good Quality Jobs](#), released 100 days ahead of COP26 by mayors and unions globally

We will get through this crisis but we also must prepare for the next one. Engagement, Collaboration and adopting a pro-poor approach that prioritises the most marginalised are key to simultaneously tackling the energy crisis and energy poverty as well as the twin crises of climate change and inequality.

Signatories of this statement include:

Ada Colau, **Mayor of Barcelona**

Susan Aitken, **Leader of Glasgow City Council**

Sadiq Khan, **Mayor of London**

Bill de Blasio, **Mayor of New York**

Jenny Durkan, **Mayor of Seattle**

Sharan Burrow, **International Trade Union Confederation**

Mariano Sanz Lubeiro, **Comisiones Obreras**

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Paul Nowak, **Trades Union Congress**

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