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## **COP27 ends with limited progress on climate action, but unprecedented engagement of global mayors**

**20 November, 2022 (SHARM EL-SHEIKH, EGYPT)** — The 27th United Nations Climate Change conference (COP27) delivered a partial success in the agreement to create a loss and damage fund. This is greatly welcome. But yet again, these climate talks failed to deliver agreement on the most basic requirements of stopping climate breakdown — to rapidly slash the burning of fossil fuels. Gas and oil were, again, specifically excluded from the text. This was, therefore, another missed opportunity for national governments to demonstrate how they are acting to limit global heating to 1.5°C.

The failure to include the phase-out of fossil fuels in the official COP27 decision text does not reflect a choice between development and environment. As [research by C40](#) and so many others shows, investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency will cost less, create more jobs, and result in far less pollution than burning more gas, oil and coal. Fifty million good, new green jobs can be created in the 96 C40 cities alone if they deliver their plans to halve emissions by 2030. Continued addiction to fossil fuels is particularly harmful to city residents, who disproportionately suffer from the pollution and health effects resulting from fossil fuel usage.

The establishment of a loss and damage fund for those countries on the frontline of the climate crisis represents real progress. Now COP28 needs to agree who pays into the fund and how much, and ensure that the beneficiaries are those which have done least to cause the problem of climate breakdown in the first place.

Sadly, the overall conclusion of COP27 is that national governments of the most polluting countries are still not willing to commit to contributing their fair share to halving global emissions by 2030 and meeting the 1.5°C target. As a result, the urgent need for cities and other non-state actors to lead immediate science-based climate action gets ever greater. But cities cannot do it alone.

C40 research shows investing in urban climate action will halve emissions and create a third more jobs than continuing with business as usual. Good, green jobs will help to create healthier, fairer communities — communities with rejuvenated

economies and lower unemployment that are no longer tied to the fossil fuels which have long exacerbated energy poverty around the world. It could also reduce air pollution by up to a third and deliver \$280 billion health-related economic benefits in C40 cities, driven in part by a reduction in fossil fuel use.

Prior to COP27, Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London and C40 Chair, asked for C40's delegation of mayors to be led by Freetown and Dhaka North, recognising the importance of Global South voices in the fight against climate change.

**Sadiq Khan, Chair of C40 Cities and Mayor of London**, said: "The COP27 agreement is a missed opportunity for national governments to meet the scale of the challenge we are facing. While I welcome the establishment of the fund for the countries that are most severely affected by the climate crisis, we need the money in place and the spending agreed to help those who often have contributed the least to climate change throughout history. We must accelerate climate action to keep on track of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees.

"Cities are using every lever at our disposal to take meaningful climate action now — but we simply cannot avert a catastrophe of this magnitude alone. We know that with the right funding and powers from national governments, C40 cities can invest in the jobs and skills of the future that will help us to tackle inequality as we tackle the climate crisis.

"We can achieve net zero carbon by 2030 and keep the crucial goal of 1.5 degrees within reach if city mayors and citizens are empowered to play a central role in future COPs. Cities are the doers — and now we need the delayers to join us."

**Yvonne Aki-Sawyer, Mayor of Freetown, C40 Vice Chair and co-lead of C40's COP27 delegation**, said: "While the importance of climate action is enshrined in Sustainable Development Goal 13, our climate affects everything. We need to move from climate finance commitments to disbursements. Only 4% of global adaptation financing has gone to the Global South; that has to change."

**Atiqul Islam, Mayor of Dhaka North, C40 Vice Chair and co-lead of C40's COP27 delegation**, said: "Every country, city and individual will be affected by the climate crisis — and so we all have a shared interest in rising to meet this challenge. Now is the time for concrete action. While we welcome the establishment of the loss and damage fund at COP27, it is still unclear how this will work and how much financing will be available. More also needs to be done on climate mitigation to keep us on track to limiting global heating to 1.5 degrees. Cities like Dhaka North are not only facing the direct effects of climate change with higher temperatures and increased rainfall. We are also addressing the devastating human cost of forced migration created by the climate emergency."

**C40 Executive Director Mark Watts** said: “C40 cities set science-based targets, work hard to deliver them, and are transparent about our progress (even C40 cities are not yet fully on track). By failing to include a commitment to cut the burning of gas, oil and coal, this COP has failed even the most basic test. With only seven COPs until emissions need to have halved in 2030, inter-governmental agreement is clearly not going to end our addiction to fossil fuels. It is time for COPs to formally include the voices of those who are already taking action at the pace and scale required — cities, some businesses, regions and millions of citizens and civil society organisations around the world.”

C40 welcomes the creation of the COP27 Presidential [Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation](#) (SURGe) initiative, launched 17 November in collaboration with UN-Habitat and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability to accelerate local and urban climate action by promoting multilevel climate governance, multi-stakeholder engagement and delivery through five tracks: Buildings and Housing, Urban Energy, Urban Waste and Consumption, Urban Mobility and Urban Water. C40 will co-lead one of these tracks.

SURGe builds on commitments of local governments and provides a holistic framework to achieve sustainable and resilient urban systems. It also aims to unlock urban climate finance and work with national governments, multilateral development banks and the private sector to facilitate access to finance, and develop a pipeline of bankable projects.

C40 will also serve as a technical partner for the new National Development Banks (NDBs) Urban Climate Action Programme, [announced](#) 9 November by the International Climate Initiative. The programme will build capacity within NDBs and cities to improve framework conditions for urban climate finance. NDBs will have a key role to play in financing the transition as cities continue to innovate on green financing solutions to support their ambitious climate action projects.

**Cassie Sutherland, C40 Managing Director of Climate Solutions and Networks**, said: “It’s been encouraging to see countries following the lead of cities to transform our built environment through the launch of the ‘Buildings Breakthrough’. Cities are showing national leaders how to get their NDCs on track for 1.5C by sharing their experience across every sector. Given the progress countries need to make, they should be taking every opportunity to learn from their cities.”

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

- Mayors and city leaders were more visible than ever at the UN climate talks, where **C40 Vice Chair and Governor of Tokyo Yuriko Koike** spoke alongside heads of states at the World Leaders Summit and the Global Climate Action Plenary, and **Atiqul Islam, C40 Vice Chair and Mayor of**

**the Dhaka North City Corporation**, represented C40 at the first-ever Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change hosted by the COP Presidency. In their interventions, mayors highlighted urban climate solutions and called on national governments and other stakeholders to ramp up local climate finance and accelerate climate change mitigation and adaptation action.

- C40's mayoral delegation to COP27 was led by C40 vice chairs **Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr of Freetown**, and **Atiqul Islam of the Dhaka North City Corporation**, and also included governors **Sakaja Johnson of Nairobi County** and **Yuriko Koike of Tokyo**, as well as mayors **Steve Adler of Austin**, **Alexander Chalmers of Warsaw**, **Barthelemy Dias of Dakar**, **Thomas Mxolisi Kaunda of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality (Durban)** and **Yousef Shawarbeh of Amman**.
- C40 travelled to COP27 with an [open letter](#) by mayors calling on world leaders to prioritise climate justice and unlock the finance needed to support cities in meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- C40's delegation reiterated a commitment made at last month's C40 World Mayors Summit to drive the [creation of 50 million good, green jobs](#) this decade, while urging national leaders to facilitate urban climate action and job creation.
- On 14 November, Chinese cities engaged with Minister-level speakers and other Global South stakeholders to discuss the role cities play in fostering South-South cooperation.
- As part of the Urban Climate Action Programme, C40 will help NDBs (1) understand climate action planning in cities and identify the pipeline of priority actions for cities to address global heating, (2) engage with cities on potential opportunities for NDB support and connect them to NDBs where needed, and (3) collaborate with NDBs on how cities typically approach financing of urban infrastructure and what challenges and opportunities they face.
- C40 officially became a signatory to the [24/7 CFE Compact](#), which brings together a group of governments, cities, investors, energy buyers, suppliers and system operators to transform global electricity grids to "absolute zero" through 24/7 carbon-free energy in line with SDG 7.
- C40 hosted a climate finance roundtable with 3Ci, and an official COP27 side event with the Climate Crisis Advisory Group, SolarPower Europe, and the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) on the role of cities in delivering a green and just energy transition.

### **About the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group**

C40 is a network of nearly 100 mayors of the world's leading cities who are working to deliver the urgent action needed right now to confront the climate crisis and create a future where everyone, everywhere can thrive. Mayors of C40 cities are

committed to using a science-based and people-focused approach to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities. Through a [Global Green New Deal](#), mayors are working alongside a broad coalition of representatives from labour, business, the youth climate movement and civil society to go further and faster than ever before.

The current Chair of C40 is Mayor of London Sadiq Khan; 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](#) and [C40 Knowledge Hub](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).