



PRESS RELEASE

US government announces US\$1 million investment to address climate migration in Latin American cities, following call from C40-MMC mayors

- *At the Cities Summit of the Americas, the U.S. State Department, USAID, C40 Cities, the Mayors Migration Council and the Climate Migration Council convened mayors, funders and U.N. representatives to discuss urban climate migration*
- *This first-ever conversation between the U.S. government and international mayors on climate migration addressed ways to unlock funding for city-led inclusive climate action*
- *USAID announced the launch of a new landmark initiative to develop city-specific roadmaps to support urban adaptation and unlock finance for city action on climate migration*

28 April, 2023 (DENVER, Co.) — Today, at the [Cities Summit of the Americas](#) in Denver, leading mayors from across the western hemisphere met with international organizations and senior U.S. government officials to discuss the impact of the climate crisis on urban migration and the need for more investment in city-led solutions.

The closed-door roundtable, convened by the U.S. State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with C40 Cities, the Mayors Migration Council and the Climate Migration Council, brought together **Mayor Jaime Pumarejo of Barranquilla**, Colombia; **Mayor Maribel Escobar of La Palma**, El Salvador; **Mayor Joel Martinez of Port of Spain**, Trinidad and Tobago; **Mayor Bob Gallagher of Bettendorf**, U.S.; **Commissioner Brigid Shea of Travis County**, U.S.; and senior representatives from CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, the U.N. Migration Agency (IOM) and the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

The discussion, opened by **Uzra Zeya, Under Secretary of the U.S. State Department for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights**, focused on city-led solutions to climate migration, including investments to better adapt in place and reduce displacement, approaches to facilitate the dignified movement of

those who live in risk-prone areas, and solutions to foster the social and economic inclusion of newcomers, including through the creation of good, green jobs.

Participants also discussed concrete ways national governments and donors can support and partner with cities, including opportunities to strengthen city-national diplomacy ties and collaboration between the [C40-MMC Global Mayors Action Agenda on Climate and Migration](#), the [Climate Migration Council's Declaration](#), and the Biden administration's policies, including the President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience (PREPARE), and USAID's Climate Strategy.

Following C40-MMC mayors' calls to invest in urban resilience and inclusion, Mileydi Guilarte, USAID's Deputy Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, announced a new \$1 million investment across the Latin America and Caribbean region to help build cities' resilience to the impacts of climate change, with a focus on addressing the unique needs of migrant communities. Working with organizations like the Mayors Migration Council, this investment will support vulnerable migrants through the development of city-level plans that foster local integration, reduce disaster risk and strengthen climate resilience in cities.

This investment is an important step to fulfill the recommendations put forward in U.S. President Joe Biden's [Report on the Impact of Climate Change on Migration](#) two years ago. Responding to a [call from C40-MMC mayors](#) from across the United States, the report marked the first time the U.S. government officially recognized the impact of climate breakdown on migration and committed to "scaling up support to urban areas to help localities plan for, accommodate, and integrate migrants and those displaced" and "build resilient urban systems."

C40, MMC and the Climate Migration Council welcome the Biden administration's efforts to deliver against these commitments in the United States and abroad, and stand ready to continue partnering with the U.S. government to inspire other champion countries to work with cities on climate migration.

Mileydi Guilarte, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, said: "Climate change is one of any number of stressors that has altered everyday life for families throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. As the effects of climate change intensify, livelihoods are being negatively impacted causing some to uproot and seek a better life in another community, city – or even country. USAID is working throughout Latin America and the Caribbean to address the economic effects of climate change and how it contributes to migration. We are committed to working with cities throughout the region to provide support as they welcome migrants and create programs to help them become an integral part of their new communities."

Jaime Pumarejo, Mayor of Barranquilla, said: “The city of Barranquilla is working to meet this need: welcoming those displaced by climate, improving resilience to urban climate risks, and fostering newcomers’ inclusion in our social and economic fabric. We are willing to work with local, national and international actors to bring these experiences to scale and enhance their replication in other cities, in Colombia and across the Americas.”

Vittoria Zanuso, Executive Director of the Mayors Migration Council, said: “While climate change is a crisis, the human mobility it creates doesn’t need to be. Global mayors are stepping up as problem solvers, but they need better national policies and direct access to funding to deliver at scale. USAID’s investment in Latin American cities is a great step in this direction. The Mayors Migration Council is ready to partner with USAID to make this project a success so we can support more cities in other parts of the world and make this new model business-as-usual.”

Mark Watts, Executive Director of C40 Cities, said: “C40 mayors are working to deliver 50 million good, green jobs by 2030 in their cities. As the majority of migrants live in urban areas, investment in green job creation represents an opportunity to support migrants, boost the economy and shift towards a greener future. Good, green jobs provide people with an alternative to forced migration, create livelihoods for people on the move, and foster the economic inclusion of newcomers to destination cities. It’s a win for people and the planet.”

Shana Tabak, Director of Immigration Strategy at Emerson Collective and Advisor to the Climate Migration Council, added: “As the climate crisis accelerates displacement of people from their communities across the globe, it’s imperative that the international community move from commitment to action. At today’s roundtable, leaders from rapidly urbanizing Latin American cities described innovative strategies – and the financial support they require – if they are to successfully adapt as our changing climate pushes more and more people to migrate within and across borders. The Climate Migration Council is committed to generating action that will build resilience in communities most impacted by climate change, and to mobilizing the global community to ensure that individuals uprooted from their homes have the support they need as they seek safety.”

Mayor Pumarejo, Vittoria Zanuso and Mark Watts are all members of the Climate Migration Council. Shana Tabak is a special advisor to the Climate Migration Council.

For more information, please contact contact@mayorsmigrationcouncil.org or media@c40.org.

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About the Mayors Migration Council

The Mayors Migration Council (MMC) is a mayor-led coalition that accelerates ambitious global action on migration and displacement. With most of the world's migrants and displaced people living in cities, our mission is to use the power of city diplomacy and city practice to create a world where urban migrants, displaced people, and receiving communities can thrive.

Created by mayors for mayors, we are a nimble team of political advisors and urban practitioners guided by a Leadership Board of global city leaders, including the Mayors of Amman, Bristol, Dhaka North, Freetown, Kampala, Milan, Montevideo, Montréal, and Zürich. As a Sponsored Project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, our work is made possible by philanthropic and government funders.

To learn more, please visit [our website](#) and [Climate Migration Resource Hub](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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; 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](#).

About the Climate Migration Council

The Climate Migration Council is a group of leaders who share a commitment to putting people at the center of climate action and to accelerating global solutions to climate-related migration.

Together, we urge governments across the globe to develop and adopt equitable and inclusive solutions to address climate-related human mobility. Specifically, the Climate Migration Council strives to: raise awareness about the importance of climate-driven migration; highlight the urgency of this growing issue and promote unified action toward humane domestic and international migration policy solutions; and leverage the power of a collective voice, including leaders in local government, business, national security, advocacy, academia, and faith who share a commitment to putting people at the center of climate solutions.

To learn more about the work the Climate Migration Council is doing, please visit <https://www.climatemigrationcouncil.org/> and follow us on [Twitter](#).