

Open letter from Mayors to the Presidents of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)

We are city leaders committed to fighting the climate crisis that threatens our homes, our economies and our world.

Over half of the global population currently live in cities. By 2050 it is expected that 2.5 billion more people will settle in cities, 90% of that movement will be in Asia and Africa. As centers of industry, innovation and commerce, cities produce 70% of greenhouse gas emissions.

Cities are also bearing much of the brunt of climate change. We face flooding, fires and extreme temperatures. The urban island heating effect means temperatures in cities can be 15 degrees above nearby rural areas.

We want our cities to be a key part of the global fight against climate change. Many cities are already leading the way with climate plans that are more ambitious than those of their respective countries and also consistent with the Paris Agreement. Through innovative measures and projects, we are adapting our communities and environments to changing patterns in food, water and biodiversity and we have a huge demand for climate-resilient infrastructure.

As cities we do not lack climate ambition. What we lack is the finance to make this ambition a reality.

Development banks can play a significant role in improving the financing environment for cities by providing policy advice and helping leverage and de-risk private finance. Cities are working hard to create the pipeline of projects we need to create resilient, low-carbon communities, but we are struggling to access the affordable finance to make these a reality.

MDBs have been vital partners of national governments in supporting economic and social development. We write to you now to ask you to turn your gaze and your influence to cities to help create an environment in which we can narrow the city climate finance gap and allow cities to take the ambitious climate action that will drive down our emissions.

We would like to work with you to achieve the following:

1. Include urban climate action and finance in the corporate and climate strategies of your bank.
2. Integrate cities and urban climate action in your country and sector assistance strategies.
3. Develop specific urban climate action programs providing: technical assistance for project preparation and implementation; scaled-up concessional MDB finance; and enhanced support for private finance mobilization.

We are aware that the global development finance system has been undergoing reform intended to ensure the global south receives support for the essential adaptation and mitigation action needed in the face of devastating climate change.

But this reform process will not succeed if it does not result in greater finance flowing into the cities. At COP28 the vital role of cities in fighting the climate crisis was recognized when over 70 national governments signed the “CHAMP” agreement, to include city and local governments when developing climate plans, or Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). A key part of the CHAMP agreement is about agreeing to include sub-national projects in climate investment priorities. This shows that closing the city climate finance gap is also increasingly a national as well as city-level priority for many nations. COP28 also saw the release of a [report developed](#) by the City Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (CCFLA), C40 Cities and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCOM), which highlights the strategic importance of urban climate action within the current MDB reform agenda.

COP29 is already being talked about as the ‘Climate Finance COP’ and this presents a unique opportunity to address the barriers to urban climate finance. We want to work collaboratively with you over the next year to scale up urban climate action and finance. As a step in this process, we ask you to meet with our city leaders at the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings in Washington DC this April.

The world cannot tackle climate change without action in cities. We ask you to work with us to make our climate ambitions a reality.

Sincerely,

ABIDJAN

Côte d'Ivoire

Governor Ibrahim Bacongo

AMMAN

Jordan

His Excellency Dr. Yousef Al-Shawarbeh

AMSTERDAM

Netherlands

Mayor Femke Halsema

ATHENS

Greece

Mayor Prof. Haris Doukas

BARCELONA

Spain

Mayor Jaume Collboni

BOGOTÁ

Colombia

Mayor Carlos Fernando Galán

BUENOS AIRES

Argentina

Mayor Jorge Macri

CHEFCHAOUEN

Morocco

Mayor Mohamed Sefiani

COPENHAGEN

Denmark

Lord Mayor Sophie Hæstorp Andersen

CURITIBA

Brazil

Mayor Rafael Greca

DAKAR

Senegal

Mayor Barthélémy Dias

DESPEÑADEROS

Argentina

Mayor Carolina Basualdo

DHAKA NORTH

Bangladesh

Mayor Md. Atiqul Islam

FREETOWN

Sierra Leone

Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyers

GUELPH

Canada

Mayor Cam Guthrie

HEIDELBERG

Germany

Lord Mayor Eckart Würzner

HOBART

Australia

Lord Mayor Anna Reynolds

ISTANBUL

Türkiye

Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu

JAKARTA

Indonesia

Acting Governor Hedu Budi Hartono

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa

Executive Mayor Kabelo Gwamanda

KLOTO I

Togo

Mayor Yawo Winny Dogbatse

LAGOS

Nigeria

Governor Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu

LISBON

Portugal

Mayor Carlos Moedas

LONDON

United Kingdom

Mayor Sadiq Khan

MAKATI

Philippines

Mayor Abigail Binay

MENJEZ

Lebanon

Mayor Georges Youssef

MILAN

Italy

Mayor Giuseppe Sala

MYKOLAIV

Ukraine

Mayor Oleksandr Sienkevych

NAIROBI

Kenya

Mayor Sakaja Arthur Johnson

OSLO

Norway

Governing Mayor Eirik Lae Solberg

PORTLAND

USA

Mayor Ted Wheeler

QUEZON CITY

Philippines

Honourable Joy Belmonte

RIO DE JANEIRO

Brazil

Mayor Eduardo Paes

ROME

Italy

Mayor Roberto Gualtieri

ROTTERDAM

Netherlands

Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb

SALVADOR

Brazil

Mayor Bruno Reis

SANTIAGO DE CHILE

Chile

Governor Claudio Orrego

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South Korea

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Governor Yuriko Koike