



MIASTO
STOLECZNE
WARSZAWA

The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
COP26 President

Mr António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Ms Patricia Espinosa
Executive Secretary - UNFCCC

CC:
Mr Charles Michel
President of the European Council

Mr David Sassoli
President of the European Parliament

Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Mr Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President, European Commission

8 November 2021

Dear President Sharma,
Dear Secretary-General, Guterres,
Dear Executive Secretary Espinosa,

The climate crisis is the gravest challenge humankind has ever faced. The global community can waste no more time in applying the necessary measures so that we keep global warming below manageable levels. Nations gathering in Glasgow for the 26th Conference of the Parties under the UNFCCC have a unique opportunity to turn the commitments of the Paris Agreement into practical action. It is crucial that decision-makers on all levels of government genuinely respond to the findings of recent IPCC reports and agree on meaningful, substantial, and immediate climate measures.

We, the mayors of the V4 capitals - Bratislava, Budapest, Prague, and Warsaw – want to deliver our positive message to Glasgow. As the capital cities of four key Central and Eastern European countries, we recognize our capacity to advance climate action and endorse the responsibility that comes with it. Our cities seek cooperation with prominent pro-climate city alliances and offer our steadfast commitment to becoming climate leaders in our countries. Tapping into our cities' pro-climate populations, well-developed infrastructure, and technological capacity, we seek to promote innovative climate solutions and accelerate positive change beyond our cities' borders.

Non-state actors play an ever-increasing role in dialling up awareness, ambition and hope to achieve climate objectives. They provide important contributions beyond their quantified emission reductions.

They build confidence in state-level climate policy, and push for more ambitious national goals. They provide space for experimentation or act as orchestrators in coordination with national governments for climate policy implementation. They incentivize, support, and inspire additional climate action by exchanging knowledge and good practices, engaging in advocacy and policy dialogue, assisting in formulating action plans, and rewarding and recognizing climate actions.

We deem this especially important in the Central and Eastern European context where national governments often drag their feet in the climate fight, and sometimes even seek to lower EU-level climate targets. Many still fail to introduce adequate policies at the necessary scale. In our countries, climate-related EU resources are not delivering as they should because of poor management, administration, and oversight of climate projects. In addition, CEE governments have more than once prevented the EU from taking a firm leadership position in the UNFCCC and other major global processes. It seems certain that without stronger contribution from Central Eastern Europe, EU decarbonisation targets will not be met. Cities can provide this stronger contribution.

Early on, cities recognized their role both as main drivers of GHG-emissions and as potential key actors in mitigating global warming. The Covenant of Mayors and other similar city initiatives such as the recently launched Mayors Alliance for the European Green Deal were formed for the very reason of tackling the root urban cause of climate change, that is, energy demand for urban heating, cooling, mobility, and public transportation. At the same time, cities and city populations are hit especially hard by the climate crisis, as witnessed in the devastating impact on the elderly population of long-lasting heat waves in dense, urban environments.

To make sure that all actors do their fair share in combating climate change, cities need to be armed with adequate resources, acknowledging the gap between their potential in climate action and their currently limited financing capacity and legal limitations imposed by their national governments.

To close this gap, we call for the following:

- UNFCCC Parties to revisit their NDCs and to submit more ambitious NDCs by the 2023 Global Stocktaking at the latest to meet the 1,5 °C limit agreed in the Paris Agreement and Parties to take city level climate action into account when submitting NDCs;
- UNFCCC Parties to adopt measures that are consistent with fundamental democratic and human rights and pave the way to a socially just and fair climate transition to ensure that no one is left behind;
- Developed countries to make clear climate financing commitments - including special, city-tailored financial solutions to support city-level climate efforts - to ensure that the USD 100 billion per year goal of the Paris Agreement will be met as soon as possible, and by 2025 at the latest;
- The EU to stay firmly committed to its 55% reduction target by 2030 and not to let MSs or business interests undermine the required legislative measures specified in the *Fit for 55* package;
- The EU to ensure that its financial framework, including the Recovery and Resilience Facility, Cohesion Policy funds and other MFF financing channels specifically target cities and local communities;
- The UN and the EU to strongly involve cities, local communities and civil society in global climate policy making and negotiations, and to build a strategic relationship with the local level to reap the potentials of local climate action.

In this historic moment we stand ready to accelerate our efforts and to engage with all relevant stakeholders so that together we act for a sustainable future and a habitable planet. With internationally coordinated action, better policies and more funds allocated worldwide for local-level action, we believe it is still possible to avert catastrophic climate change.

Yours sincerely,



Matúš Vallo
Mayor of Bratislava



Gergely Karácsony
Mayor of Budapest



Zdeněk Hřib
Mayor of Prague



Rafał Trzaskowski
Mayor of Warsaw