



**World Mayor Summit
Mexico City, 21 November 2010**

**Statement by Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Honourable Mayor Ebrard,

Honourable Mayors, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to address this summit. Indeed, this gathering is a powerful demonstration of the commitment of cities to tackle climate change. Your commitment today will become all the more critical as we move into the next decades.

Today, cities already consume up to 80 percent of the global energy output, generate 70 percent of all waste and contribute some 60 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, cities, especially poor urban population groups, are also highly vulnerable to climate change impacts such as rising sea-levels, floods and storms. This means that cities are an essential piece in the global climate puzzle and that you are at the frontline of the responsibility of both reducing emissions and decreasing the climate vulnerability of the urban poor.

Back in 2008, fifty percent of the world's population lived in cities. By 2030, the world's population is projected to total some 8.3 billion, 70 percent of which is expected to be urban. This places an increased responsibility on cities, which will undoubtedly continue to grow either according to the high polluting unsustainable paradigm of the past, or along a new low emitting, much more efficient path of growth and sustainability.

The choice is yours to make, and this gathering is as much evidence to taking on that responsibility as it is to your awareness that, as city leaders, you need to be closely concerned with people's lives and livelihoods now and in the future.

And so I thank you, Mayor Ebrard and the co-organizers, for taking the initiative of bringing Mayors together to sign the voluntary Mexico City Pact - a few days before the world convenes on Mexican soil to decide on the next steps of international climate action.

The Pact takes an important three-pronged approach, and let me briefly comment on each one.

First - Commitments: I greatly welcome the commitments to reduce emissions coming from cities. From Cape Town to Amsterdam, Sydney to Sao Paulo, Hong Kong to Mexico City and many more; I am very encouraged by the high level of ambition that many cities are putting forward.

Moreover, many cities have detailed climate change plans, and many of these feature ambitious mid-term and long-term reduction goals. This provides long-term policy clarity at the local level and can be an important starting point for transitioning to green growth and investment. But let us remember that the achievement of these emission reductions often requires actions beyond the political, administrative and normative spheres of cities. Hence I expect to see increasingly joint efforts between cities and national actors to achieve climate goals, along the wisdom of vertically integrated climate actions.

Second - Measurement and reporting : Subjecting your commitments to transparent and independent reviews is a critical step for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of emission reductions over long time-lines. It is that which turns policy intentions into real action.

I congratulate ICLEI and its partners for having made a good start in this direction. The ‘carbonn Cities Climate Registry’, to be launched at this summit, will facilitate transparency and accountability of local climate actions and help local governments to demonstrate leadership in climate action.

Beyond that, the impact of the registry can be maximized if it is expanded in two directions: First, in its inclusiveness to embrace actions of non-governmental stakeholders such as NGOs and business, without double counting; second, in its harmonious integration into national level systems of accounting and reporting, in order to allow global tracking of progress.

Using transparent and comparable methodologies for monitoring and reporting will be at the heart of this effort and will take some leadership among the city networks and international organizations to reconcile competing approaches. But that is the only way that your contribution will become more visible to your national governments and to the global community.

Lastly - Climate Financing: Visibility and credible reporting will be of crucial importance in the context of climate financing. We have seen tangible commitments to provide incremental climate financing by developed countries, including Fast Track Funding of USD 30 billion to 2012. The sources of a total of USD 28 billion have already been identified for the three-year period.

I welcome your efforts, jointly with the World Bank and other organizations, to systematically explore ways for cities to access climate finance to cover the incremental costs of high priority and cost-effective climate actions.

As you are already investing heavily in infrastructure, it may, at times, require only limited funding for improved planning and design, to make those investments climate smarter and more climate resilient.

In other cases, this may not be so, and more substantial funding may be required. As a result, more innovative sources may be needed. One such source could include local cap-and-trade mechanisms, like in Los Angeles or Santiago. Such mechanisms could be designed in a way that they generate additional finances for climate action.

Honourable Mayors, to a large degree, these elements mirror current thinking in the international climate negotiations.

In Cancun, countries will aim to operationalize some key elements of climate change action including:

- Formalizing mitigation pledges that have been made at national level throughout this year;
- A process to ensure transparency and accountability of mitigation in both developed and developing countries;
- A framework to support adaptation in developing countries;
- A technology mechanism to promote clean technology diffusion; and
- A fund to house long-term climate funding.

Reaching agreement on these issues won't be easy, but I am confident that national governments can succeed. And once they do, it is clear that national governments will depend on subnational governments, on business and on non-governmental stakeholders to collectively deliver on mitigation and adaptation commitments.

The Mexico City Pact sends a key signal to the negotiations that it can indeed be done, and that millions, if not billions, of people around the world are ready to begin implementing climate change action. Cities are part of the broader national landscape and the most effective climate action will come from integrated efforts at the national, regional and local levels.

Let me conclude by thanking you for sending this strong signal to the Global Community, that

- Cities Care about Climate Change;
- Cities Can do something about it, and
- Cities Commit to act now.

Thank you

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