



MEDIA RELEASE

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## **COP29: While Baku delivered the bare minimum, multilevel action is more vital than ever to keep climate ambition on track**

**Baku, Azerbaijan** (27 November 2024) – Upon the conclusion of COP29, the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency welcomes the first major climate finance deal in fifteen years. However, the deal is inadequate to ensure that communities around the world can protect themselves and represents the absolute floor of finance that is needed. With a disappointing lack of ambition in the overall COP29 outcomes, the LGMA Constituency stressed the increasing importance of multilevel action to ensure the climate fight continues at speed and scale.

Strong support for multilevel cooperation at COP29's Ministerial Meeting(s) on Urbanization and Climate Change, with a commitment to continuity between the urban initiatives of COP27, COP28, COP29 and COP30; a host of important local and regional government network announcements; and coordinated, energized advocacy by the Constituency - with over 500 delegates in all - marked the high points for local and other subnational government delegates at this COP.

Local and regional governments sent more than 100+ political leaders and mobilized more than 500 delegates to advance city and region climate goals at COP29 landing the delegation on the top ten list in size if it were a country. LGMA delegates participated in more than 170 events across the negotiations space, plenary sessions, Pavilions and Green Zone.

“COP29 outcomes are a clear demonstration that global commitments and solidarity for climate action is one of the immediate and biggest victims of the evolving domestic and geopolitical turbulence. In these challenging times, effective planning and implementation between all levels of government, combined with sustainable urbanization, will be among the most important tools to raise climate ambition, deliver on climate action and uphold global solidarity

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and the LGMA will continue to be an even stronger partner for all national governments and global community that are still attached to those values,” said **Yunus Arian, Director of Global Advocacy at ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) and the LGMA Focal Point to the UNFCCC.**

### **LGMA JOINT COP29 POSITION: THE LGMA CONSTITUENCY UNITED AROUND THREE CLEAR OUTCOMES, WHICH DROVE ADVOCACY EFFORTS**

On 20 November, Urbanization Day at COP29, LGMA released its [COP29 Joint Position](#). The position was endorsed by nearly 100 local and regional governments and their global networks.

In the position, the LGMA called on Parties to COP29 to urgently accelerate inclusive, multilevel, and gender-responsive climate action by embedding local and subnational governments within new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Additionally, highlighting the need for equitable climate financing, the LGMA urged COP29 to adopt an ambitious New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance that enables access across government levels. Finally, the LGMA asked Parties to build on the COP28 Joint Statement on Climate, Nature, and People, with deeper integration of biodiversity and climate goals. These positions were reiterated throughout the Climate Summit through formal interventions and dialogues with the Parties.

The [Multisectoral Action Pathways \(MAP\) for Resilient and Healthy Cities Declaration](#) was a key outcome of COP29. Over 160 stakeholders, including countries and cities, as well as the LGMA, have already endorsed the initiative, which aims to guide climate negotiations and policy discussions through COP30, highlighting the critical role of cities in tackling climate vulnerabilities and fostering a sustainable future. LGMA also expressed its support for a COP29 Truce Deal as a timely and necessary effort, and proposed a strong synergy with the biodiversity COP16 theme on “Peace with Nature” to strengthen such efforts.

Throughout COP29, the [LGMA produced and circulated to Parties recommended text inclusions](#) across multiple negotiation areas to provide guidance to Parties on the ongoing draft texts.

### **LGMA RESPONSE TO THE NEGOTIATED OUTCOMES OF COP29, INCLUDING FINANCE, MITIGATION WORK PROGRAMME, GLOBAL STOCKTAKE**

On the **new quantified goal on climate finance**, the LGMA called for trillions by 2030. Thus, the LGMA will advocate to ensure that the agreed-upon global finance goal of 1,3 trillion USD by

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2035, including 300 billion USD of public finance, is a floor, not a ceiling and that climate finance instruments do not add to debt burdens of local, subnational and national governments.

Regarding the **Mitigation Work Programme**, the LGMA welcomes inclusion of specific recommendations from the 3rd and 4th Dialogues on cities, buildings and urban systems. This recommendations, combined with the 3rd edition of the Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate that brought forward multiple urban initiatives, means that the LGMA will advocate for seizing opportunities through sustainable urbanisation for climate action by institutionalization of such meetings and concepts in the UNFCCC Process towards and by COP30, as well as through relevant initiatives by COP27-COP28-COP29 Presidencies.

The LGMA also welcomes the COP29 decision to **extend the mandate of High Level Champions until 2030**. The LGMA stands ready to advance the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, in particular by enhancing the engagement of Thematic Groups and their partners through additional technical and financial support, as well as connecting numerous initiatives to raise ambition of new national climate plans by 20205, as appropriate.

The LGMA was very concerned that in Baku no decision was adopted on the **global stocktake**. Nevertheless, the LGMA will engage in the design and preparation of NDCs3.0 by 2025, pursuant to para.161 of COP28 UAE Consensus, support COP28's [Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships \(CHAMP\) for Climate Action](#) initiative to increase good practices on multilevel climate action, and convene [Town Hall COPs](#) to connect our communities into climate emergency action and national climate plans.

At COP29, parties debated key issues around **adaptation**, and there was consensus to limit indicators to 100 globally applicable options, allowing parties to voluntarily report based on national circumstances. The final decision mandates developing means of implementation indicators, sets criteria for experts' work, launches the Baku Adaptation Roadmap, and establishes high-level dialogues on adaptation. Experts will finalize the indicator list by mid-2025, with adoption expected at COP30 in Brazil. The decision emphasizes social inclusion, human rights, and participatory processes, including cross-cutting indicators for education and youth health. However, the lack of strong provisions for locally-led indicators remains a concern for the LGMA, which plans to stay engaged through workshops and dialogues.

**THE MULTILEVEL ACTION & URBANIZATION PAVILION AT COP29: CITIES AND REGIONS HAD A DYNAMIC GLOBAL STAGE AT COP29**

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The LGMA Constituency (through ICLEI, as its focal point,) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization, hosted a joint pavilion at COP29. The Pavilion hosted 50 events, with more than 230 speakers from more than fifty countries.

The Multilevel Action & Urbanization Pavilion served as the global stage for the city and subnational climate agenda at COP29. The Pavilion was co-hosted by Azerbaijan State Committee on Urban Planning and Architecture (SCUPA); the ILBANK, development and investment bank of local authorities in Türkiye, with the support of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change; Zero Waste Foundation; and Bloomberg Philanthropies.

### **NEW BRAZIL NDC HIGHLIGHTS MULTILEVEL COOPERATION**

On Day 3 of COP29, 13 November, Brazil submitted its updated Nationally Determined Contribution. Brazil's submission serves as an excellent example of how to scale up the role of local and other subnational governments in the planning and implementation of climate goals. The NDC makes direct reference to all levels of government working together and to COP28's CHAMP initiative.

### **MINISTERIAL MEETING(S) ON URBANIZATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE MAINTAINS STRONG URBAN PRESENCE ON THE COP AGENDA**

Global leaders gathered for the third Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change on 20 November, Urbanization Day at the COP. The Ministerial Meeting, including the High-Level Opening and Roundtables, was co-hosted by the COP29 Presidency and UN-Habitat with the support of Azerbaijan's SCUPA, the COP29 High-Level Champion, Azerbaijan's Ministry of Digital Development and Transport, UNEP, WHO, ITF, WMO, FAO, Multilateral Development Banks, and with the support from Bloomberg Philanthropies and the LGMA.

The meeting emphasized the vital role cities must play in addressing the climate crisis and accelerating sustainable urban development. The LGMA Constituency was proud to support this important moment in the COP29 agenda.

“To the national leaders in this room, my message is clear: Cities are ready and willing to help. We are innovative, determined, and already driving the change on the ground. We will never give up; you can rely on that. But, together, we can all do so much better,” said **Minna Arve**,

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**Mayor, City of Turku, Finland and ICLEI First Vice President**, while delivering the LGMA Constituency's Statement.

## **CALL TO DELIVER AN EFFICIENT LOCAL AND SUBNATIONAL RESPONSE FOR LOSS & DAMAGE**

On 18 November, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), on behalf of the LGMA Constituency and the Global Taskforce for Local and Regional Governments, released a [‘call to deliver’ an efficient local and subnational Loss and Damage response](#). It urges international institutions, as well as national, subnational and local governments to step up in addressing the severe impacts of climate change. Based on the [UCLG Positioning Paper on Loss and Damage](#) that recognizes that adaptation alone is not enough, the call demands a comprehensive response that crosses borders, engages all levels of governance, and prioritizes those most vulnerable. The call to deliver has already been [endorsed](#) by many local and regional governments as well as LGMA partners including ICLEI, Regions4, Under2 Coalition, Metropolis and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR).

## **RESPONSES FROM LGMA MEMBERS**

**Vasco Alves Cordeiro, President of the European Committee of the Regions and Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of the Azores (Portugal):** "Only by working together with all levels of governance, will we make the green transition a success. International climate conferences are key milestones for our ambition to live on a green and healthy planet. Amidst a challenging geopolitical landscape, the world united to agree on a new approach for international climate finance. A key success factor will be how this funding reaches subnational governments who are in the frontline of the fight against the climate crisis. While the European Committee of the Regions had hoped for more ambitious outcomes in the field of mitigation, COP29 lays the groundwork for further multilevel action in Belém next year. Subnational governments will keep driving the progress toward climate-neutral and resilient communities, but we cannot do it alone. This must be taken into account in the upcoming Nationally Determined Contributions to be presented for the COP30 next year."

**Clifford Galea Vella, President of North Region (Malta), Local Councils' Association (Malta), representative of CEMR & PLATFORMA Young Elected Officials Committee at COP29:** "Last week, I had the privilege of representing CEMR, PLATFORMA, and Malta's Northern Region at COP29 in Azerbaijan. During various discussions and meetings, it was clear that many of the actions needed for global climate progress are already being implemented by the Northern Region. Although we are small, even as a nation, Malta is making a significant contribution. This

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is our call to action—one that is echoed by both CEMR and PLATFORMA: we must act now, as time is against us! It was encouraging to see an increase in funding at the final session of COP29, but we must ensure that this money is used effectively and not wasted on mere publicity. If it is, future generations will hold us accountable. With the introduction of the ‘COP of the Cities’ concept by the Brazilian authorities for next year, I hope we will see even greater involvement from local governments who have firsthand experience in driving change.”

**Sami Kanaan, President of Geneva Cities Hub, Deputy Mayor of Geneva:** “COP29 concludes with highly mixed results, particularly regarding climate justice and the rapid, sustainable energy transition. With the majority of the global population living in urban centers, local and regional governments are on the front lines of addressing the social and environmental impacts of the climate emergency. They must be fully involved in subsequent multilateral negotiations, as well as in any implementation plans that directly affect them.”

**Marianne Overton, CEMR Representative at COP29 and Spokesperson on Climate and Energy, Lincolnshire County and North Kesteven District Councillor:** “We stand at a critical moment where clear, collective action is no longer optional but essential. The lessons of the past decade have taught us that local and regional governments (LRGs) are vital partners in achieving the ambitious climate and sustainability goals set by the global community. The road to carbon neutrality, outlined since the Paris Agreement and reinforced by the EU Green Deal, must be paved with genuine multilevel governance, inclusive dialogue, and targeted resources. CEMR and PLATFORMA are committed to amplifying the voices of local leaders who are at the forefront of climate action. We call for deeper integration of local and regional governments in national and international strategies, recognizing their unique capabilities to translate ambitious targets into concrete, impactful action. Only through reinforced partnerships, tailored financial frameworks, and shared technological advancements can we accelerate the path toward a sustainable, carbon-neutral future for all. Together, we can ensure that no community is left behind in this urgent global mission.”

**Dr Champa Patel, Executive Director of Governments and Policy at Climate Group:** “Two weeks of deadlock, division and delay at COP29 left us with little to celebrate when it comes to the climate finance that is needed to support developing countries. That there is any number at all is a miracle given how many leading economies turned up with no figure on offer. In the face of national governments dragging their feet and zero additional commitment on phasing out fossil fuel, the future of climate action increasingly lies with subnational actors - it’s *game on*. Their leadership has already proven effective, and they must now double down on ambitious

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commitments, scale up collaboration, and continue to advocate for stronger recognition in global climate governance.”

**Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, WWF Global Climate and Energy Lead, former Minister of Environment for Peru and COP20 President:** "It is clear that the climate crisis we face will require the whole of society to respond fully. In this context, the role of local governments is paramount. Cities are responsible for 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and ensuring we have 1.5oC-aligned cities is essential to help reduce global emissions by 42% by 2030, as science has indicated we must do. We also must urgently accelerate the transformation to clean energy and to build resilience in communities. Everyone acting together makes us stronger, even in the face of national leaders who dither on climate action."

**Gregor Robertson, Special Envoy for Cities in CHAMP, and GCoM Global Ambassador:** “CHAMP stands out as a beacon of hope – for cities and regions to access the support they need to deliver transformational action on mitigation and adaptation, and for countries to nearly double the impact of their efforts to implement their climate ambitions by including city climate plans in their national strategies. Now more than ever, we need to support cities, states and regions in the climate fight.”

**Emilia Saiz, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG):** "United Cities and Local Governments calls for stronger multilevel governance as we move towards COP30. The path to universal justice in addressing loss and damage demands greater collaboration, ensuring no community is left behind in the fight against climate change. The constituency of local and regional governments through the Global Taskforce and LGMA stands ready to lead, innovate, and partner for a future where development and justice go hand in hand."

**Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor, Municipality of Chefchaouen, Morocco; ICLEI Vice President; and ICLEI Africa Regional Executive Committee Member representing the Africa region on ICLEI's Global Executive Committee:** “At the beginning of COP29 we, subnational leaders, called for a new annual climate finance goal of trillions per year by 2030, to support just and equitable climate resilient development, where it is needed most – at the local level. And that this new goal is connected to the reform of the global finance architecture, allowing improved access to this finance for those working at the local level, where climate change impacts are experienced. At the end of COP29 we are concerned about the ambition of the New Collective Quantified Goal of 300 USD billion per year, but support the goal to reach 1,3 trillion USD per year as soon as possible. Those of us working tirelessly at the local level have good practices and solutions to share in terms of how scaled finance can be spent with transparency, care and maximum impact. It is why we attend these COPs year on year. We look forward to continuing to play our

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part, bringing these tangible solutions to the table, as we build up to next year’s critical climate COP.”

**Brigid Shea, Travis County, Texas, Commissioner and ICLEI USA Board Chair:** “We know the nations of the world can’t solve this problem alone. It is our cities and regions that suffer the greatest human toll from climate disasters, and we are stepping up with solutions.”

**Natalia Uribe, Secretary General of Regions4:** "At COP29, Parties engaged in critical discussions on adaptation, focusing on the inclusion of means of implementation indicators, the launch of the Baku Adaptation Roadmap, and advancing transformational adaptation, with a growing alignment between climate and biodiversity action. Subnational governments, implementing up to 90% of adaptation policies, have a critical role in both delivering adaptation on the ground and informing global adaptation processes. Through our RegionsAdapt initiative we will continue collaborating with the Climate Champions, the Race to Resilience, and LGMA to ensure that efforts of regional governments are not only recognized in monitoring progress but also in actively shaping plans, actions, and financing mechanisms. Achieving the global goal on adaptation requires decisive leadership across all levels of government making adaptation more just, strategic, and transformational. "

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

More about the LGMA at COP29:

<https://www.cities-and-regions.org/cop29/>

LGMA interventions at COP29:

<https://www.cities-and-regions.org/cop29/lgma-cop29-interventions/>

The LGMA COP29 Joint Position:

<https://www.cities-and-regions.org/cop29/cop29-lgma-joint-position/>

The Multilevel Action & Urbanization Pavilion:

<https://www.cities-and-regions.org/multilevel-action-urbanization-pavilion-at-cop29/>

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## **CONTACT**



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## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

### **About Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency**

Since the Earth Summit in 1992, when nine stakeholder groups – including local authorities – were designated as essential partners in implementing the global sustainability agenda, the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency has represented networks of local and regional governments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The LGMA has served as the voice of cities and regions since the first Conference of Parties (COP) in 1995 and continues to achieve advocacy success for multilevel action in the climate, nature, and desertification processes. The LGMA has grown to more than 45 accredited networks of local and regional governments. The LGMA coordinates inputs to the global climate negotiations all year, influencing and informing outcomes toward meeting the Paris Agreement. For more information, please visit: [www.cities-and-regions.org/](http://www.cities-and-regions.org/)

### **About the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments**

The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments is a coordination and consultation mechanism that brings together the major international networks of local governments to undertake joint advocacy work relating to global policy processes. It was set up in 2013 to bring the perspectives of local and regional governments to the SDGs, climate change agenda and New Urban Agenda in particular. The Global Taskforce convenes elected local and regional leaders from around the world in the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, whose role in the follow-up of the New Urban Agenda is recognized in the Quito Outcome Document. For more information, please visit: <https://www.global-taskforce.org/about-us>

### **About ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability**

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (known as "ICLEI") is a global network of more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, we influence sustainability policy and drive local action for zero emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. Our Members and team of experts

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work together through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building to create systemic change for urban sustainability. For more information, please visit: <https://iclei.org/>

### **About the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)**

CEMR is the broadest association of local and regional governments in Europe. Its members are 60 national associations of municipalities and regions from 40 European countries. Together these associations represent some 115,000 local and regional governments. For more information, please visit: [ccre-cemr.org](https://ccre-cemr.org)

### **About European Committee of the Regions**

The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) is the voice of regions and cities in the European Union (EU). It represents local and regional authorities across the European Union and advises on new laws that have an impact on regions and cities (70% of all EU legislation). The CoR is a political assembly composed of 329 members and 329 alternates from all EU Member States (grouped by political party and headed by the President) who have been elected at local or regional level (for example as Mayors or Presidents of a region). The European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission must consult the CoR in policy areas that are defined in the EU Treaties. For more information, please visit: [www.cor.europa.eu](https://www.cor.europa.eu)

### **About PLATFORMA**

PLATFORMA is the pan-European coalition of towns and regions – and their national, EU and global associations – active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation. For more information, please visit: [platforma-dev.eu](https://platforma-dev.eu)

### **About Regions4**

Regions4 is the global voice of regional governments (states, regions and provinces) before UN negotiations, European Union initiatives and global discussions in the fields of climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development. Regions4 was established in 2002 at the World Summit in Johannesburg as the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development – nrg4SD. In 2019, it became Regions4, and now represents 47 regional governments from 23 countries on four continents. For more information, please visit: [www.regions4.org](https://www.regions4.org)

### **About Under2 Coalition**

Under2 Coalition is the largest global network of states and regions committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest. Today, the coalition represents 173 individual states, regions, provinces and subnational governments along with several other national and

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subnational entities: a total of more than 270 actors, totaling more than 50% of global GDP. For more information, please visit: [www.theclimategroup.org/under2-coalition](http://www.theclimategroup.org/under2-coalition)

**About United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)**

UCLG is the product of a century-old collaborative movement of local and regional governments. It is the voice of democratic local self-government and, with 250,000 members in over 140 States, it represents 70% of the world's population through local and regional governments in seven world regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eurasia, Europe, Middle East and West Asia, Latin America, and North America. It also has a regional section and a section for metropolises and metropolitan areas. UCLG has ECOSOC consultative status. For more information, please visit: [www.uclg.org](http://www.uclg.org)