

NANCY

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URBAN7 INTERNATIONAL MAYORS SUMMIT

Under the French G7 Presidency

NANCY DECLARATION RESILIENT CITIES AS THE FOUNDATION OF GLOBAL RESILIENCE

PREAMBLE: CITIES AS THE G7'S STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Reaffirming the foundational role of international law and agreements in ensuring global stability, peace, and prosperity,

Recognising the central importance of multilateralism and its related fora, including but not limited to the G7, G20, OECD, the Council of Europe, and UN,

Acknowledging the importance of institutionalised multilevel dialogue within multilateral organisations,

Referring in particular to the UN Rio Conventions, the Paris Agreement, the European Urban Charter III, the UN 2030 Agenda, and UN-Habitat New Urban Agenda, as key multilateral frameworks to tackle the urban issues of our time,

Welcoming initiatives to foster multi-level governance such as the Coalition on Higher Ambition on Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP), the UN Forum of Mayors, the Local2030 Coalition and the Regional and Global Covenants of Mayors for Energy and Climate,

Acknowledging the growing role of Voluntary Local Reviews and Voluntary Subnational Reviews in advancing the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals and in strengthening accountability at the local level, in complement to National Voluntary Reviews and action on the SDGs,

Building on the legacy of the Urban7 engagement during preceding G7 presidencies and respective U7 Declarations,

We, the City Mayors and Leaders gathered through the networks and associations of local governments of G7 nations and the European Union at the Urban7 International Mayors Summit in Nancy, warmly welcome the decision of the 2026 French G7 Presidency to formally recognise Urban7 as an engagement group to the G7 process.

As local governments, our primary concern is the delivery of an inclusive, just, sustainable, and prosperous future for all our inhabitants. In doing so, we are on the frontlines of securing our democracies and economies, implementing the climate and digital transitions, and providing accessible, affordable, and resilient infrastructure and services.

This unique role establishes us as long-term, strategic, and trusted partners to the G7, with whom we are committed to engaging in a permanent, constructive, and responsible dialogue.

Accordingly, we call on the G7's nations to support our efforts through appropriate multilevel and multilateral governance frameworks and processes with corresponding resources.

As detailed in this Declaration, we specifically call on G7 Leaders to: position cities as custodians of peace, democracy, and global solidarity through strengthened city diplomacy; embed cities in integrated resilience frameworks, including for affordable, sustainable housing; and mobilise cities as engines of competitiveness, sustainable transformation, and trusted digital transitions in service of all urban communities.

The resilience of our cities ultimately rests on the human bonds that sustain them — the social cohesion of our communities, the sense of belonging shared across generations, and the universal access to quality public services that bind urban life together. Investing in our younger generations and maintaining the local public services that underpin daily life in all G7 cities are not separate from the G7 agenda: they are the conditions under which every other priority — from competitiveness to climate, from democracy to security — can credibly be delivered.

Together, we can truly lay the foundations for a resilient world.

I. CITIES AS CUSTODIANS OF PEACE, DEMOCRACY AND GLOBAL SOLIDARITY AMID MOUNTING GLOBAL PRESSURES

The upheaval caused by the erosion of democratic norms, tensions and conflicts, climate-related disasters, and public health emergencies primarily materialises in urban areas. These suffer disproportionately from the erosion of international norms around human rights and democracy, and the weakening of principles of solidarity and cooperation. In this regard, the Urban7 supports the French G7 Presidency's goal of reforming global governance to prevent fragmentation and antagonism.

Cities and communities are thus by definition at the heart of efforts to tackle the challenges facing G7 countries, frequently acting as custodians of peace and democracy, and as the level at which the implementation and localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals translates into tangible outcomes for residents.

As Mayors and City Leaders, we do so through:

- **Unwavering support for Ukraine:** We reiterate our fundamental support for Ukrainian municipal resilience, positioning cities not merely as beneficiaries but as strategic actors in their own reconstruction and the reconstruction of the country. We recognise the work of the 'Coalition of the Willing' and stand ready, where possible and in line with our respective mandates, to contribute financial and technical assistance for the sustainable recovery of Ukraine.
- **Advancing City Diplomacy:** We call for the institutionalisation of city diplomacy as a recognised instrument for navigating geopolitical risks, combating disinformation, and sustaining cooperation and economic stability even when state-to-state relations are put under strain. Rooted in mutual interest and practical problem-solving, city-to-city partnerships and cooperation offer a resilient channel for dialogue that endures well beyond political cycles.
- **Cultural Diplomacy:** We recognise the role of cultural exchange and cultural diplomacy in fostering peace, mutual understanding, and cooperation between municipalities and beyond their borders, complementing political and economic channels with the civic and cultural ties that bind communities together over time.
- **Defending Local Democracy and Peace:** We condemn all threats, intimidation, and arbitrary detention of democratically elected local officials. We stand in solidarity with all municipal leaders facing persecution for exercising their democratic mandate. We recognise initiatives such as those of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions in defence of local elected representatives, and of the U.S. Conference of Mayors through the Oklahoma City Declaration, condemning political violence and recommitting to democratic values and standing for local and fair elections. We call on G7 governments to uphold the protection of local democratic governance as a non-negotiable principle and as a precondition for the credibility of the G7's defence of democracy, for the resilience of multilevel governance systems, and for the capacity of cities to act as reliable partners in delivering G7 priorities.

Beyond the defense of peace and democracy at home, cities also act as essential conduits of global solidarity. Contemporary international partnerships are most resilient when grounded in mutual benefit rather than unilateral aid or donor-recipient logic. In this spirit, Urban7 in particular points to:

- **Inter-Forum Cooperation:** We advocate for strengthened collaboration between the Urban7 and city engagement platforms of other multilateral fora, including the Urban20 (U20) and other existing international and city-to-city networks to ensure policy coherence and amplify the urban voice across the global governance architecture. We call for comparable recognition of city engagement platforms across other multilateral fora.
- **Strategic Global South Engagement:** Recognising that 90% of global urban growth by 2050 will occur in Asia and Africa, we call for G7 countries' financial and technical support for decentralised development cooperation (DDC), enabling the scaling up of reciprocal city-to-city partnerships with the Global South to provide and exchange technical assistance, reduce aid fragmentation, and strengthen the capacity of partner countries' urban communities to build the local foundations that make sustainable development possible, unlock new economic opportunities, and develop resilient supply-chains and new trade and security partnerships.
- **Mobilising Private Capital:** We recognise the limits of public budgets to ensure the resilience of urban areas beyond the G7 and call for the G7 to leverage existing instruments and create new instruments that channel private investment and financing for local priorities like infrastructure and urban development, with appropriate social and environmental guardrails.

II. URBAN RESILIENCE, HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Urban resilience is not a single challenge but an interconnected set of capacities that cities and communities must build simultaneously. Whether facing democratic erosion, socio-economic shocks, or climate-related disasters, our communities are strongest when their institutions, economies, and infrastructure are designed to anticipate, withstand, and adapt to disruption. As Mayors, we understand resilience as encompassing four inseparable, mutually reinforcing dimensions:

- **Socio-Economic Resilience:** We recognise that resilient urban communities depend on inclusive local economies, robust social safety nets, active civil society, and the active engagement and participation of all residents in their full diversity.
- **Democratic and Institutional Resilience:** We affirm that strong democratic institutions are the bedrock of urban resilience. In the face of declining public trust, rising disinformation, and growing foreign interference, cities must be equipped to withstand threats that erode democratic governance. As laboratories for democratic innovation (e.g., participatory budgeting, deliberative assemblies) cities build resilience through transparency, inclusion, and sustained civic participation.
- **Climate, Environmental and Disaster Resilience:** We recognise that resilience must be embedded as a guiding principle in urban planning, infrastructure and building design, and investment from the outset — not treated as an afterthought. Cities and communities are already deploying scalable solutions, from nature-based infrastructure and zoning reform to cooling corridors and floodplain redesign. We recognise disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness for hazards including earthquakes, alongside growing threats like wildfires, flooding and other extreme weather events as integral to this work, and endeavour to embed the principles of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction across local planning, response, and culturally-sensitive recovery, building on the achievements and comprehensive approach to disaster risk reduction established by the Hyogo Framework for Action.

- **Economic Empowerment and Local Welfare:** Beyond the protection of those most in need, we affirm the role of local and regional governments in actively creating welfare and empowering local economies. Cities and communities are not only safety nets but engines of inclusive prosperity, anchoring local value chains, supporting small and medium enterprises, and catalysing the kind of place-based economic development that builds long-term community resilience.

We specifically welcome the 2026 French Presidency's efforts to tackle urban resilience together with the real estate sector, and through its *Real Estate Resilience for Prosperity* (RER4P) platform. Urban7 endorses this initiative and offers its support.

We also call for the G7 governments to:

- **Adopt an integrated understanding of resilience**, and systematically integrate cities, communities, and regions into national preparedness, response, and recovery frameworks, recognising that resilience is built, tested, and maintained at the urban scale: cities are the level at which preparedness becomes response, response becomes recovery, and recovery becomes long-term adaptation.
- **Recognise the critical importance of safe buildings and resilient infrastructure design** in disaster preparedness, as well as the importance of placing culture at the heart of rebuilding communities, and the leading role of cities, communities, and regions in advancing these efforts.
- **Support cities in strengthening neighbourhood-level inclusion**, fostering local employment and talent retention, safeguarding economic sovereignty through transparent investment frameworks, and advancing city-to-city cooperation on economic de-risking.
- **Strengthen multilevel cooperation with local authorities**, support the protection of electoral integrity, address ideological risks to open and pluralistic societies, and reinforce cities' capacity to safeguard democratic governance, given that cities are the daily point of contact between residents and democratic institutions, and therefore the front line on which trust in democracy is either earned or eroded.
- **Align public finance with adaptation needs**, bridging the urban adaptation finance gap, and harmonising resilience indicators to enable replicable, bankable solutions at scale, since the financing gap concentrates where the adaptation needs concentrate — in urban areas — and closing it is therefore both the most efficient and the most just allocation of climate finance.
- **Take a dual focus on social equity and ecological health** that prioritises the protection of vulnerable groups through inclusive design, bolsters biodiversity through nature-based solutions.
- **Maintain insurance affordability and protect public budgets** against the increasing frequency of climate-related shocks, in particular through the development of standardised methodologies and instruments for identifying, disclosing, and assessing climate-related financial risks.
- **Provide granular satellite data and projections** to support local risk assessments and effective early warning systems.
- **Recognise the existential risks faced by fragile territories** for hydrogeological risk, coastal and low-lying urban areas from accelerating sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion, and coastal erosion, and support cities in adapting to these challenges, in line with the UN Ocean Conference Declaration adopted at UNOC3 (Nice, June 2025).

Across all of these dimensions, housing emerges as a foundational pillar of urban resilience — intersecting with the climate, socio-economic, democratic, and economic strands addressed above, and shaping the daily security of urban residents more directly than almost any other policy area.

Cities and communities across and beyond the G7 face a growing housing crisis, fuelled by skyrocketing rental, property, and energy and raw materials prices, and reflected in rising levels of homelessness across many G7 territories.

We reiterate that access to adequate, affordable, and sustainable housing in urban centres is fundamental to social cohesion, economic stability, inclusive urbanisation, environmental responsibility and the safety of our cities.

In this regard, we welcome initiatives such as the Mayors for Housing Alliance and other municipal coalitions across the G7 that serve as vehicles for coordinated municipal leadership on the housing crisis.

We therefore call on G7 governments to:

- **Empower local governance and social equity** by increasing financial and regulatory support to simplify housing processes, ensuring social transfer systems provide equitable access to affordable, climate-resilient homes.
- **Adopt a systemic, climate-proof approach to urban development** that integrates essential services—such as heating, cooling, and mobility—with access to green spaces and durable infrastructure designed to last for decades.
- **Cultivate long-term partnerships and innovation** across the entire construction value chain, uniting public and private actors to finance and develop future-ready housing solutions that balance immediate affordability with sustainability.

III. CITIES AS ENGINES OF COMPETITIVENESS AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION

The ecological, digital and economic transitions at the core of the G7 agenda are inherently urban in nature. Cities and communities are the primary arenas in which competitiveness is built or lost, and in which the social and territorial impacts of de-industrialisation, supply-chain disruption, and demographic change are most directly felt by residents. Cities are therefore central to ensuring that these transitions are economically viable, socially tenable, and politically sustainable, and to safeguarding the prosperity, sovereignty, and trust on which G7 cooperation ultimately depends.

We therefore set out below five interlocking priorities through which the G7 can support cities in delivering these transitions:

- **Artificial Intelligence and Digital Governance:** We call on the G7 nations to ensure equitable and safe access to AI infrastructure, support open data standards, and fund local digital literacy programmes, with particular attention to the risks of misuse of social media platforms and generative AI — especially as these impact younger generations — and to the digital safety of children and minors, in line with the French Presidency’s priority on a safer digital space for minors. We further call on G7 nations to address the nexus between digital governance and democratic resilience, including the threats posed to local democracy by AI-enabled disinformation, algorithmic opacity, and digital surveillance, and to ensure that the digital transition strengthens, rather than erodes, the conditions for democratic life in our cities.
- **Biodiversity:** We call on G7 governments to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to secure the liveability of cities, improve human, and enable the full implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at CBD COP15, through collaborative action with local

and regional governments, taking into account its Target 12 on urban green space and its Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities for Biodiversity 2021-2030.

- **Energy Transition and Building Decarbonisation:** We call on G7 governments to accelerate decarbonisation of the built environment through large-scale retrofit programmes, district heating/cooling networks, and local renewable energy deployment — while foregrounding energy poverty as a social justice issue and the need to equip cities with the regulatory tools and financing to lead the transformation.
- **Sustainable Mobility Systems and Urban-Regional Connectivity:** We call on G7 governments to invest in sustainable urban mobility systems — including public transport, active mobility, fleet electrification, and seamless urban-regional connectivity — as essential infrastructure for low-carbon, productive, and inclusive cities, and as the foundation for the labour mobility, supply-chain integration, and territorial cohesion on which G7 competitiveness ultimately depends.
- **Integrated Urban Transformation:** We call on G7 governments to support integrated urban transformation strategies that align housing, mobility, energy, digital, and climate investments at the city scale, recognising that fragmented sectoral interventions cannot deliver the systemic outcomes the G7 agenda requires, and that cities, in close coordination with regions, are the only level of government capable of coordinating these investments around the lived realities of residents.

CONCLUSION: URBAN7 AS A TRUSTED, LONG-TERM PARTNER

As the Urban7, we work towards a continuous and meaningful dialogue between the G7 nations and the municipal actors we represent through national associations and international city networks. We contribute a local perspective grounded in implementation experience, operational capacity, and proximity to citizens.

Supported by a permanent secretariat and building on the institutional recognition granted by the French Presidency, we commit to sustaining this engagement across future G7 presidencies to ensure continuity, accountability, and the progressive deepening of the urban dimension within the G7 process.

As detailed in this Declaration, we call on G7 Leaders to: position cities as custodians of peace, democracy, and global solidarity through strengthened city diplomacy and reciprocal partnerships with the Global South; embed cities in integrated resilience frameworks that secure adequate, affordable, and sustainable housing as a pillar of urban resilience; and mobilise cities as engines of competitiveness, sustainable transformation, and trusted digital transitions that protect future economic prosperity and democratic life in service of all urban communities.

We invite G7 Leaders at the **Évian Summit** to anchor these mechanisms of cooperation, ensuring that we address the urban dimension of global challenges in a coordinated, inclusive, and forward-looking manner.

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