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Press Release:

# City Leaders from G7 Nations Convene at U7 Mayors Summit and Adopt Powerful Declaration

3 May 2022

**On May 3, 2022, mayors came together with high-level representatives of the German G7 Presidency to discuss the decisive role of cities achieving the G7 Presidency's vision of "progress towards an equitable world."**

The cities of the G7 - together with their global partners - are the driving forces working for equitable, sustainable and democratic development. The Urban7 Group Alliance, consisting of the [Association of German Cities](#), [ICLEI](#) and the [Global Parliament of Mayors](#), hosted the [U7 Mayors Summit](#) with the theme "Embracing the Urban World: Cities as Drivers of Change for Peace, Democracy and Sustainability." The Urban7 Group Alliance is supported by [Engagement Global](#) and the [German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development](#).

At the Summit, mayors lauded the German G7 Presidency's emphasis on the need for ambitious implementation of the sustainable development goals and welcomed the recognition of cities, sustainable urban development, and multi-level governance in the program of the G7 Presidency 2022.

However, mayors noted that the global political system must change in order for cities' full potential to be realized.

The U7 Mayors Summit is the most significant event of cities in the framework of the German G7 Presidency. Mayors from the G7 and the Global South formulated their expectations for the G7 Presidency and at the same time made clear that progress for a just world can only be realized in and with strong cities. Mayors also adopted a [Mayors Declaration](#), which presented cities' demands and commitments toward the G7 Presidency.

**Markus Lewe, Mayor of the City of Münster (Germany) and President of the German Association of Cities**, said: "*Cities are the drivers of change for peace,*

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*democracy and sustainability. The war in Ukraine shows once more that freedom, democracy and human rights cannot not be taken for granted. City diplomacy is a glimmer of hope. That is why the urban perspective needs to be taken into account when discussing global challenges. The U7 Mayors Summit today sends out a clear signal: Cities are ready to do their share."*

**Peter Kurz, Mayor of Mannheim (Germany), Chair of the Global Parliament of Mayors and G7 special envoy of the Association of German Cities Association of German Cities** remarked: *"The Urban7 welcomes the unprecedented recognition of the importance of cities, urban development, and multi-level governance in the G7 Presidency Programme. We see this as a historic opportunity. However, the transformative power of cities to address major global challenges, as invoked in the Programme, can only be harnessed if the global political system changes to truly include cities, viewing them not primarily as an administrative implementation level, but as a political level in their own right, co-developing policy programs on an equal footing."*

**Frank Cownie, Mayor of Des Moines (USA), and president of ICLEI's Global Executive Committee** said, *"In 2022, U7 raised up as an emerging actor in the global urban diplomacy space. The strong unity among U7 local government networks; firm and ambitious positions at the U7 Mayors Declaration; interest and recognition from the G7 Presidency, and solidarity with our partners in the Global South, provide clear evidence of this remarkable progress. ICLEI is committed to supporting the momentum of G7 and connecting with other relevant advocacy opportunities throughout the year, in order to elevate sustainable urban development and critical multi-level cooperation in the global efforts on peace, democracy and sustainability."*

**Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)**, told the gathered mayors, *"I am convinced that the battle for climate protection and sustainability will be won or lost in cities. You are calling on G7 governments to step up ODA for integrated urban development and climate action. The G7 and the German G7 Presidency acknowledge this need. Urban development has been a priority in Germany's development cooperation for many years. We are well aware of the gaps in funding, access to knowledge and personnel that municipalities in the global south and beyond are facing when it comes to planning and building sustainable infrastructure. This is exactly where the G7 infrastructure initiative comes in – it supports forward-looking investment in sustainable infrastructure and recognizes the importance of cities in developing and financing sustainable infrastructure as well as municipal, local and regional governments' processes for the transformative shift."*

**Dr. Rolf Böisinger, State Secretary, German Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building (BMWSB)** said: *"Today's Urban Summit is an important step*



*in giving the municipal level a stronger voice in multilateral cooperation and for the implementation of sustainable urban development policies. I invite cities represented by the Urban7 to join the G7 talks on sustainable urban development our Ministry is preparing at the moment. Together we will emphasize the importance of urban policies focused on the common good for the solution of the great challenges we face and we will underline the role of multi-level-governance approaches."*

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