3 September 2019

Excellency,

I have the honor to enclose herewith the outcomes of the 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference held in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the United States, from 26-28 August 2019, titled “Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities” and “Youth Climate Compact”, which were handed over to me for the attention of the General Assembly.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

[Signature]

Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York
We, as members of civil society, adopt this document to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on the education and global citizenship focus of Gyeongju (2016) and the concept of people-centered multilateralism we developed in New York (2018). This year, we concentrate specifically on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11: "to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by 2030." We underscore the need to understand cities and communities as central to the achievement of all SDGs and not only SDG11. We highlight the importance of inclusivity, peace, family, education, youth, and the empowerment of women and girls. Further, we explore the ethical development of the economy, infrastructure, and technology needed to support balanced, sustainable communities. We recognize the interdependence of rural and urban prosperity, as well as the need to address the specific conditions of mountainous areas and small island developing States. We also highlight the need for collaboration of governments, civil society, and the United Nations in this work and stress the urgent need for climate action. For each of these, we affirm our beliefs and shared values, urge others to partner with us, and commit ourselves to actions that uplift the human spirit, create humane cities in which people can flourish, and enhance the quality of life and dignity for all. Without recognition of the challenges to our quest for sustainable and inclusive communities, we will accomplish nothing.
Therefore, we affirm:

- The importance of inclusivity and respect for the dignity and human rights of all. Thus, sustainable cities and communities must foster opportunities regardless of age; gender; race; nation of origin; sexual orientation; religion; socio-economic status; disability; language; universal, societal, and individual traditions and values; or political opinion.
- "[The] family-related provisions of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and their follow-up processes [that] continue to provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centered components of policies and programs as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development."[1]
- The need for immediate and effective action in response to the climate crisis. It poses a grave threat today, not only to the sustainability of human society, but to life itself, especially in coastal communities and other vulnerable places. Furthermore, the window for effective action is closing rapidly.
- The need to recognize peace as a fundamental component of sustainable societies, defining it not just as the absence of war and civil strife, but as the active presence of justice, security, social stability, inclusivity, accessibility, and lives lived in harmony with one’s neighbors and the earth’s ecosystems. We specifically recognize the need to address forced migration and its impact on both migrants and communities of origin, transit, and destination.
- The engagement of all members of civil society in global and local governance. Good and accountable governance, free of corruption, is key to the achievement of the SDGs, rule of law, and justice for all.
- The significance and potential of youth. More broadly, we affirm the need to empower all generations with education, skills, and opportunities. These will allow youth to sustain themselves; contribute to the health, well-being, prosperity, and resilience of society; and thereby enable all generations to thrive.
- The need for adequate, affordable, accessible housing, public services, infrastructure, mobility, and land management. These will reduce poverty, homelessness, and hunger while sustaining connectedness, human and environmental health, and community-led development.
- The potential for the ethical use and development of technology to address critical challenges faced by communities, harness opportunities, meet the needs of our planet, and re-envision the way we live.
- The need for community-relevant, goal-oriented private and public investment at all levels of society.
- The pivotal importance of education, including technological literacy; it is key to raising awareness of the SDGs and to our capacity to achieve them, especially Goal 11.
- The central role of local governments in the localization of the 2030 Agenda. Its 17 SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda. These global agendas are only as good as the positive transformation they trigger for people, planet, prosperity, and partnerships.

Simple recognition of a problem does not generate progress unless stakeholders actively facilitate solutions. Thus, we encourage all stakeholders to form integrated, goal-oriented action plans that are tailored to the unique circumstances of their cities and communities. Stakeholders include individuals, children, youth, families, women, farmers, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, faith-based communities and organizations, scientific and technology communities, education and academia, workers and trade


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unions, persons with disabilities, volunteers, aging people, business and industry, philanthropies, and governments at all levels.

Therefore, we urge all stakeholders:

- To enhance inclusivity and respect for the dignity of all, from which human rights originate. Accordingly, we work to remove unjust systemic barriers to success, noting that bias and discrimination marginalize and segregate large segments of society. We especially call out racism, religious intolerance, and gender inequality.
- To support the family in its essential educating and nurturing roles, recognizing its important contribution to social integration.
- To recognize the severity and urgency of the climate change crisis and the destructive impact of our human footprint. We must act on clean, renewable sources of energy, low-emission mobility modes, and net-zero energy buildings. This change will mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by cities and will protect our air, water, and ecosystems, thus sustaining biodiversity. Further, we recognize that countries and cities will experience climate and environmental challenges differently and have different resources with which to address them.
- To replace excessive consumerism with balanced production, consumption, reuse, and recycling.
- To build and sustain safe, peaceful, and just societies, free from war, civil strife, human exploitation, hate speech, and other crimes. Conflict resolution; respect for the faith, values, and traditions of all; and access to healthcare, including mental and behavioral health, are central to this effort.
- To ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for our youth through educational, vocational, and mentorship experiences that meet individual needs and facilitate inclusive, effective intergenerational dialogue. These will develop skills needed to create or access local socio-economic opportunities.
- To invest in sustainable housing, public services, mobility systems, safe drinking water, sanitation and waste systems, and other infrastructure accessible to all citizens. This investment will enable resiliency and prosperity and reduce poverty and hunger. It will also ensure that development minimizes environmental harm while connecting people with jobs, services, commerce, and each other.
- To develop and appropriately use old, new, and future technology to address challenges to sustainability, inequality, accessibility, human and environmental health, education, climate change, communication, commerce, agriculture, and safety.
- To establish legal and institutional frameworks that enable community and business investments to positively impact every level of society and every social and economic group.
- To ensure that governments and organizations at all levels take human needs and the environment into account while addressing societal, economic, infrastructural, and administrative policy.
- To encourage and support all stakeholders in their efforts to collect, maintain, and monitor relevant SDG data, thereby allowing analysis by all demographic groups and by territory.
- To incentivize all educational organizations to encourage pluralistic mindsets and engagement in civic and political processes. These efforts should emphasize the role of civil society and contribute practically to the achievement of the SDGs.
- To enable local strategies that embrace the universal vision of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda while remaining sensitive to local contexts.
Concrete actions and mechanisms for accountability must follow our affirmations and commitments if we are to build cities and communities that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable.

Therefore, as global citizens, we commit individually and collectively:

- To apply conscious inclusivity and respect for human dignity and rights in our daily lives while advocating for similar efforts in our corporate and organizational lives; in our laws, regulations, policies, and practices; and in our economy. This should facilitate the inclusion of marginalized, vulnerable, and deprived members of society.
- To practice environmental stewardship by proactively mitigating climate change and its adverse impacts.
- To promote sustainable peace as the presence of harmony, respect, and inclusive collaboration in our communities, within and among countries.
- To inspire and support youth in their visions of, preparation for, and access to a robust future.
- To urge governments, together with community partners, to build, upgrade, and repair infrastructure in ways that maximize sustainability, improve accessibility, minimize adverse environmental impacts, and ensure the ability to withstand climate change and natural disasters.
- To use appropriate technologies to ensure inclusivity and accessibility, economic prosperity, and to mitigate climate change and other adverse environmental effects.
- To mobilize public and private sector funds and investments to impact the implementation of SDG 11 related projects. Namely, these should include efforts to provide housing and basic services; upgrade slums; deliver sustainable transport systems; plan and manage participatory and integrated human settlements; protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage; reduce disaster risk and increase disaster resilience; reduce the adverse environmental impact of cities; develop green and public spaces; create links between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas; integrate policy making; and support Least Developed Countries in building sustainable, resilient infrastructure using local materials.
- To form civil society collaborations, including public-private partnerships, in order to formulate policies, mechanisms, and regulations that foster peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable cities and communities. These efforts must include ways to track progress via key performance indicators.
- To protect a free press and make wise and productive use of social and conventional media to communicate, build consensus, and bring together policy makers, businesses, families, and individuals to advance shared interests for the common good.

To accelerate the ideas and principles expressed in this document:

We urge UN Member States and UN system entities:

- To engage and collaborate with ECOSOC and Department of Global Communications accredited organizations[^1] in strategic actions that support and advance the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda.

[^1] ECOSOC accredited organizations

• To build on the vision, values, and commitments enshrined in this Outcome to deliver concrete multi-stakeholder discussion spaces, policies, partnerships, and implementation tools for sustainable and inclusive cities and communities.

• To facilitate robust inputs and interactive discussions with UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders during the SDG Summit on 24-25 September 2019. We call on the Secretariat of the SDG Summit to provide a visible platform and modalities for the public dissemination of relevant analyses and reports produced by UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders.

• To establish robust monitoring mechanisms for the transformative initiatives that will be showcased at the UN Secretary General Climate Action Summit on 23 September 2019. This should be done via mechanisms existing under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

• To provide meaningful spaces and mechanisms for the sustained engagement of civil society in the dialogues that mark the 75th anniversary of the UN. We underscore that this anniversary provides a much-needed opportunity to reflect on the direction of the UN and to ensure its ability to address the global challenges of the 21st century as experienced by people in their communities.

We call on governments at all levels and all other stakeholders:

• To commit during the SDG Summit to actions that accelerate SDGs implementation and localization with people-centered strategies. Furthermore, we underscore the need to understand cities and communities central to the achievement of all SDGs and not only SDG11.

• To give follow-up to their actions to accelerate SDGs through Voluntary National Reviews and UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders reports.

• To actively support and engage in the tenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF10), convened by the UN Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) on 8-13 February 2020 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. We underscore the critical importance of WUF to share practices, tools, and knowledge on how to achieve the SDGs and deliver climate change action in cities and communities.

We have only 11 years to deliver on the promises we made through the Sustainable Development Goals. We have less than 11 years to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Therefore, be it resolved:

We, the participants of the 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference, will continue to actively contribute to our communities individually and in collaboration with other stakeholders to further the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as we move toward the United Nations' 75th Anniversary in 2020.

We endorse and support the Youth Climate Compact, the objective of which is to identify specific actions that can be taken to reduce the devastating effects of the climate crisis and adapt our communities in mindset and structure.

We thank the people and the governments of the United States of America, the State of Utah, and Salt Lake City for the kind welcome and gracious hosting they have given to the 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference and for their efforts to achieve United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

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Youth Climate Compact

*Drafted in the spirit of the 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference: “Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities”*  
*Salt Lake City, Utah, United States of America*  
*August 26-28, 2019*

We, the youth, unite in action against the climate crisis. The Earth’s climate is nearing the point-of-no-return from which life on the planet cannot recover. The cost of inaction is too immense. Threats to the climate menace every aspect of our world; and the sustainable communities we must build for the future depend on our collective will to meet and overcome these existential challenges.

This compact identifies specific actions we can take to reduce the devastating effects of the climate crisis and adapt our communities in mindset and structure. The large-scale changes that the world needs cannot happen without the cooperation of countries, cities, civil societies, and the private sector. However, each individual can play a role in this movement. Recognizing that access to resources varies throughout the world, we urge all to adopt pledges that resonate with them and incite climate action in their own communities. As each signature is added to this compact, a global network of motivated and concerned youth grows. Over half of the world’s population are youth. Such a network will be able to tackle the systemic processes which have enabled and propelled the climate crisis.

Without an immediate paradigm shift, we will continue to see profoundly destructive consequences on human life across the planet. Rising sea levels and temperatures, water acidity and pollution, and abnormally severe natural disasters are causing the rapid decrease of Arctic sea ice extent, the decimation of biodiversity, the gradual disappearance of geographically
vulnerable regions, particularly Small Island Developing States, and the disproportionate burden on economically disadvantaged areas in the Global South.

Climate change is aggravating global crises, intensifying drought and the lack of access to clean water and, subsequently, heightening global conflicts. By 2050, over 143 million people will be displaced as a result. Rapid industrial development coupled with inadequate regulation will hasten air pollution, deforestation, and acid rain; consequently undermining the ability both of natural habitats and human societies to support the thriving of their lifeforms, and thereby precipitating negative health outcomes for all species alike.

Overwhelming empirical evidence prove that the rapid intensification of the climate crisis was caused by human activity. We now must undo the damages. The Montréal Protocol successfully scaled back ozone depletion, but new climate crises require that we assert a more comprehensive global agreement. The future is uncertain, and the devastation to the planet will become irreversible without immediate global action.

*Hereby, we the youth pledge to:*

1. Raise awareness in our own communities about policy that is detrimental to the health of our planet and promote policy which works to confront the main causes of the climate crisis;
2. Educate ourselves, our families, and our networks through formal and informal channels, including social media, on the impacts that we as individuals and as a collective society have on the climate through daily lifestyle choices;
3. Innovate climate-conscious solutions to local and global challenges and support scaling of sustainable products for widespread use;
4. Advance the widespread education of women and girls, understanding that doing so is a critical step in combating climate change;
5. Be mindful of the effects of our consumption, compounded in the manufacturing, transport, storage, sales, use, and disposal of products;
6. Implement the 6Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair, Rethink, and Refuse in order to fulfill a net-negative carbon future to reverse environmental degradation;
7. Use our purchasing power to encourage businesses to prioritize sustainable models and environmental well-being over short-term profits;
8. Prioritize environmentally friendly mobility options; influence relevant governing bodies to center the “Avoid, Shift, and Improve” framework in their building of sustainable local mobility systems and infrastructure;
9. Properly dispose of waste, and advocate for improved waste management infrastructure;
10. Avoid single-use plastic products and packaging to reduce the accumulation of waste;
11. Shift our diets to be plant-forward and climate conscious, reducing meat consumption and demanding reforms in food production industries as appropriate;
12. Call attention to the environmental harms caused by factory farming and unsustainable agricultural practices; opt for local food and support sustainable producers;
13. Caution against the toxic composition and limit our use of certain cosmetic, personal care, cleaning, and menstrual hygiene products, thereby reducing their contribution to pollution and ozone depletion;
14. Reduce consumption of products that exacerbate deforestation and urge our governments to improve forest ecosystem health and reforest desertified land;
15. Protect forests and rainforests, which produce large amounts of oxygen, from fires and destruction;
16. Use renewable sources of energy such as hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass when accessible; divest from fossil fuels, mining, and other businesses that profit at the expense of our planet;
17. Commit to conserving current energy reserves and sources through sparing usage only when necessary, effectively reducing carbon output and protecting energy security;
18. Invest in climate solutions and green jobs, ensuring our industrial transition toward a net-negative economy is just, equitable, and does not leave people and communities behind;
19. Integrate climate-resilient infrastructures and business models to reduce the effects of natural disasters;
20. Support organizations that strive to reduce negative impact on the environment while actively engaging in innovative and sustainable practices;
21. Actively participate in climate-related political processes, maximizing the voice of the people and challenging the influence of profiteers; urge political representatives to understand the pressing nature of the climate crisis and support policies that promote the health of our planet;
22. Condemn laws and regulations that deny environmental justice to and disproportionately affect marginalized groups; call attention to the disproportionate effects of climate emergencies on developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries;
23. Mobilize to remedy the disproportionate effects of resource depletion, environmental degradation, and pollution on vulnerable populations, such as indigenous peoples;
24. Foster inclusion when addressing the pledges in this Compact, realizing that collaboration within and between communities is crucial in ending the climate crisis;
25. Acknowledge all forms of life on Earth, understanding that we are all interconnected in the global ecosystem.

Through this collective agreement, we strive to harness the power of the youth to build a future that is certain and free of the devastation of the climate crisis.

We seek cooperation and support from all generations, governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector in achieving the targets of this compact. Thus, we further our commitment to the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, leaving no one behind.

At the advent of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, we request the United Nations Department of Global Communications Civil Society Youth Representatives Programme submit a report on the progress made by young people to address climate change. The unique challenges of our time also present unique opportunities. We remain hopeful that united in action, we can build a sustainable future for all.