

Reply to Open Letter from Mayors to the Presidents of Multilateral Development Banks

Dear Mayors,

Thank you for your letter to the Presidents of the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) about the key role cities play in addressing the climate crisis. We are inspired by your climate ambitions and leadership and are pleased to respond.

We recognize that as city leaders, you are on the front lines of the climate fight. Whether it is from heat waves, flooding, power outages, or food and water shortages, urban residents are increasingly vulnerable to the escalating impacts of climate change. But just as cities are bearing the brunt of the climate crisis, you are also at the forefront of delivering extraordinary climate solutions.

And yet, as development banks, we understand that a limited access to finance is posing a critical barrier to your cities' climate action plans. We are working to help, by scaling up urban climate finance and/or technical assistance to support city efforts and to help achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement. Our respective institutions see city leaders as vital partners in reducing urban emissions and creating more resilient urban environments.

That is why we collectively reiterate our commitment to accelerating climate funding to cities, including through concessional funds, subnational lending, and derisking instruments to leverage private sector investment where possible. We will continue to raise the profile of cities in our country and sector strategies and global dialogues. We also aim to sharpen our focus on urban climate adaptation, including the urban nature agenda.

Going forward, we are eager to work more closely with city leaders, networks, and related initiatives, including initiatives such as the Coalition for High-Ambition Multi-level Partnerships (CHAMP). We propose to enhance our collaboration to promote better coordinated national, regional, and in-country approaches to urban development and climate challenges. Sharing knowledge and good practices will be a key part of this effort, including through the MDB Cities Group, which has been active for the past three years.

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With all this in mind, we agree wholeheartedly with your suggestion to have high-level representatives of our MDB Cities Group meet at a side event during the World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington, D.C. in April 2025. To keep the momentum going, we also suggest scheduling a regular series of meetings over the next 18 months between representatives of the technical teams of the MDBs, C40 Cities, the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (CCFLA), and the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM), building on the success of our meeting on the sidelines of the World Bank Spring Meeting in April 2024.

We would like to focus these discussions around two important priorities: first, scaling up urban climate finance, and second, increasing urban climate adaptation. We propose to establish clear goals and milestones to guide our conversations. We believe this more organized effort would allow us to better identify specific actions to support cities around the world in making their climate ambitions a reality.

We look forward to continuing this conversation at upcoming forums in November, including the World Urban Forum in Cairo and Urbanisation Day at COP29 in Baku. Together, we will overcome the city climate finance gap and ensure that cities are placed at the heart of tackling the climate emergency. We know we do not have time to waste.

Yours sincerely,

Solomon Quaynor

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