



#Youth4Climate Live Series

Session Title: Driving Local Action

Date: February 26, 2021

Time: 16:00-17:00 CEST (10:00-11:00 am EST)

Background

The adoption of the Paris Agreement was a turning point in international climate negotiations, introducing a new platform for all countries to implement domestic action and provide international support. However, ambition efforts pledged by countries still fall short of the goals identified by science and embodied by the Agreement: as certified by the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming and other studies, the aggregate effect of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for GHG emissions reductions is not yet consistent with a pathway to a “well below 2°C” world, or the more ambitious 1.5 degrees goal.

To ensure such goals are met, a fast and extensive transformation of energy and industrial systems is needed by countries, to achieve a cut of at least 45% of GHG emissions compared to 2010 levels in 2030 according to UNEP. However, such shift is unlikely to be fulfilled by governmental actions only, thus shedding a light on the importance of “non-State actors”, especially large cities. Recent reports show that over 55% of the world population currently lives in urban areas, and such share may increase to nearly 70% by 2050. Accordingly, it will be essential that cities foster their resilience and mitigation policies, to ensure healthier urban environments, reduce their GHG emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change.

Over the past few years, several initiatives have been developed to create a network of cities and local communities: these include initiatives such as the new global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, which provides support to local authorities in their efforts on mitigation, adaptation and sustainable management of waste. However, cities – especially small towns and local communities – have in many cases experienced technical and financial challenges in implementing their planned actions to tackle climate change. New, innovative solutions are therefore required, whilst recognizing the importance of local and indigenous peoples’ knowledge and experience in living in harmony with nature.

Recently, new challenges have also emerged following the outbreak of the pandemic, which has significantly affected life and mobility in cities. According to UN Habitat, urban areas (and particularly globally connected cities) have been the first epicentres of COVID-19, accounting for nearly 95 per cent of confirmed cases. This reinforced the case for the need to rebuild cities sustainably, from an economic, social and environmental perspective. To this purpose, additional initiatives have been launched, such as C40’s Global Mayors COVID-19 recovery task force, aimed at improving public health, reducing inequality and addressing the climate





crisis. The linkages between sustainability and urban development will become increasingly relevant in 2021, as it will be International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development. A number of international events focusing on cities will also take place in 2021, including World Cities Summit and ICLEI's World Congress.

The Event

This session is part of the *#Youth4ClimateLive Series*: an exclusive programme of nine dynamic and inspiring webinars with empowering creative content, dedicated to young people, and promoted by the Italian Ministry for the Environment Land and Sea, as part of the initiatives organized in the run-up to Pre-COP26 that will be held in Milan, Italy, in 2021. This webinar, titled **"Driving Local Action"**, will be focused on the role of cities and local communities in the fight against climate change, including by discussing historical and recent challenges and opportunities, as well as ways to further enhance cities' role and action at the global level. Moreover, modalities and solutions to foster youth and indigenous peoples' participation at the local level will be addressed.

Session Organization

The session will open with an introductory video message by Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN Habitat, addressing the challenges and opportunities of cities and local communities. The session will then feature a live discussion between two high level speakers on the following questions:

- What are the challenges cities and local communities currently face in taking action on climate change, also in light of COVID-19?
- What responses can be put in place to transform cities towards sustainability, while improving public health and reducing inequalities?
- How can cities and local communities contribute to enhance their countries' national climate change ambition?

Three youth representatives will then join the discussion, to provide their view on the following questions:

- How do you think local climate measures can benefit from the contribution of youth and indigenous peoples?
- What are you doing to engage your city or local community to that purpose?

Finally, the following question will be addressed to both HL and youth speakers for a brief debate:

- What are the barriers for enhanced engagement and participation of youth in shaping cities and local communities' policies and actions on climate change?

As the episode is the last one of the *#Youth4ClimateLive Series*, the session will end with key special messages of the key actors of the COP26.



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DRIVING MOMENTUM TOWARDS PRE-COP AND COP26



Speakers

Moderators

- Salina Abraham
- Ahmed Badr

High-Level Speakers

- **Giuseppe Sala**, Mayor of Milan, Head of C40's Global Mayors COVID-19 Recovery Task Force
- **João Henrique Campos**, Mayor of Recife

Youth Speakers

- **Sarah Farheen Khan**, Programme Assistant, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh and Country Co-coordinator, YOUNGO
- **Lodovica Cattani**, Organizer, LCOY Italy and Country Co-coordinator for Italy, COY16
- **Neeshad Shafi**, Co-Founder, Arab Youth Climate Movement Qatar (AYCMQA)

Video Messages

- **Roberto Cingolani**, Minister for the Environment, Land and Sea, Italy
- **Maimunah Mohd Sharif**, Executive Director, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
- **Patricia Espinoza**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- **Alok Sharma**, COP26 President, the United Kingdom

Proposed Run of Show

Moderators Salina Abraham and Ahmed Badr will open the event and guide the conversation between the live guests while encouraging interaction with the young audience. As a further incentive for participants to watch the episode until the very end, moderators will also anticipate the provision of information, at the end of the webinar, about the upcoming deadline for applications to attend the “Youth4Climate: Driving Ambition” event in Milan. Then, introductory remarks from high-level speakers will spark a dynamic discussion between three representatives of the global youth climate movement about their perspectives on how to foster climate action in cities and local communities.

10:00 am	Salina & Ahmed	Welcome and introductions by the moderators
10:05 am	Director Sharif	Introductory video message
10:10 am	Mayor Sala, Mayor Campos	Opening remarks, first round of questions (7 minutes each)
10:25 am	Youth Speakers	Youth speakers each have a few minutes to introduce themselves, their work, and give their take on the second round of questions (5 minutes each)



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10:40 am	All Speakers	Interactive session, to respond to the final question addressed to all speakers (2 minutes each)
10:50 am	Salina & Ahmed	Closing remarks

