

François Hollande to leaders of cities, regions and civil society: “You are one of the pillars of the Paris Climate 2015 agreement”

Players from cities and local governments show climate ambition at World Summit Climate & Territories



French President François Hollande and participants at the World Summit Climate & Territories (photo credit: Région Rhône-Alpes)

LYON, 1 JULY 2015 – French President **François HOLLANDE** today commended the role of local government authorities in the fight against climate change, on the first day of the World Summit Climate & Territories, the largest gathering of leaders from cities, regions and civil society representatives before the Paris Climate 2015 conference (COP21).

“Five months before the COP21 in Paris, the World Summit Climate & Territories is an important step, a sign of collective will and of mobilisation of the world’s territories,” said the French President in front of 800 representatives of local authorities and non-governmental organisations from more than 80 countries. *“Your meeting shows that climate actions is everyone’s business: states, governments, territories, charities, the private sector, all non-state actors. You are one of the pillars of the agreement.”*

In Lyon, the French President announced his support for local authorities gaining direct access to climate finance, as well as plans for a special day dedicated to them at the COP21.

Janos PASZTOR, UN Assistant Secretary-General on Climate Change, addressed delegates to say:

“Mayors, governors and local authorities can all band together within your countries to give your national government’s confidence – they need your support to raise ambitions.

“You could show them that it is possible. You are on the frontlines of the climate challenge and you can empower leaders in your country to rise above political divides. You could unite local leaders within your country.”

*"This meeting is unprecedented in scale, continued **Jean-Jack QUEYRANNE**, President of the Rhône-Alpes region and host of the summit. "Governments are no longer alone. We carry the hopes of people worldwide, in their diversity - but also in their common conscience.*

"We come with concrete commitments, one of the summit's originalities. These commitments, quantified for some of them, will help focus important efforts - and allow us to amplify them within our own responsibilities."

Ronan DANTEC (French Senator, UCLG climate spokesman and WSCT Summit co-organiser) said: *"In the face of climate fatalism and the risk of territories becoming inward-looking, the summit is a bold show of mobilised players, demonstrating ambition in the struggle against climate change and working for a more cooperative planet."*

Sharan BURROW, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), said: *"Put simply – there are no jobs on a dead planet. Unions are demanding –and offering – to take responsibility at all levels, from governments to workplaces worldwide, to plan for a just transition and deliver climate action."*

Michèle OKALA, young volunteer for the environment (Cameroon), emphasised the concerns of youth worldwide: *"We, young people, as world citizens and change-makers, know our responsibility in battling climate disruption. We want to support our leaders but in return, we would like them to listen."*

In Lyon, Rhône-Alpes (France), Scotland (UK) and the Basque Country (Spain) joined 14 other states and provinces, including California (US) and Bade Württemberg (Germany) to sign the "[Under 2 MOU](#)," a first-of-its-kind agreement to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius. Together they represent more than \$5 trillion in gross domestic product (the equivalent of the third largest economy in the world) and 123 million in population.

"Our growing, diverse coalition is proof that a significant group of states and territories from around the globe are ready to support ambitious commitments by their national governments in Paris this December," said California Secretary for Environmental Protection **Matthew RODRIQUEZ**. "At the same time, it demonstrates that subnationals are not waiting for their national governments to act. The threat of climate change is real, and subnational governments are a critical piece of the solution. The time for aggressive action is now."

Addressing the summit via video message, **Mike BLOOMBERG**, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change, and former Mayor of New York City, said: *"This summit is the chance for city and local government leaders to set ambitious goals to reduce carbon emissions – and show national governments how much they are already doing."*

During the day, delegates focused on subjects including the challenge for cities and local authorities to carry global growth on their shoulders while tackling climate change; how to empower young people as tomorrow's generation of leaders; and the special role of local officials as agents of change.

The first day of the summit was also the chance to announce the results of a global citizens' debate, "[World Wide Views on Climate Change](#)", which revealed that seven out of ten citizens think the response to climate change will bring more benefits than problems.

MEDIA RESOURCES

- Download the Summit's videos and photos: <http://en.rhonealpes.fr/1247-media-area.htm>
- Check the programme of Day 2 : <http://en.rhonealpes.fr/1255-programme.htm>
- Follow us on Twitter [@WSCT2015](#) #WSCT
- Follow the Summit's livestream : www.worldclimatesummit2015.org

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ABOUT THE WORLD SUMMIT CLIMATE & TERRITORIES

The World Summit Climate & Territories is presented under the High Patronage of the President of the French Republic. It is an official COP21 event, organised in collaboration with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.



United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change

The updated programme can be found at: <http://en.rhonealpes.fr/1197-world-climate-summit-2015-en.htm>

Hosted in Lyon by the Rhone-Alpes Region, the World Summit Climate & Territories is co-organised by the following organisations:

Subnational and Local Government Networks



networks:

Civil Society Representatives

Indigenous Peoples



Business



Workers



Farmers



Youth



NGOs



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