

DECLARATION of MAYORS ON JUST TRANSITION

We, the Mayors,

Recognizing that Europe's commitment to the Paris Agreement and the European strategic long-term vision for a climate neutral economy by 2050 will entail the decarbonization of the European economy,

Stressing that Europe's transition towards a net zero emissions economy should not happen at the expense of the coal and lignite mining regions, which for decades have propelled the European economy,

Recognizing the consistency of the Just Transition with European values and cohesion,

Expressing our distress that coal and lignite mining regions across Europe will face unprecedented social and economic challenges as a result Europe's transition towards a net zero emissions economy,

Emphasizing that urgent action is needed as several coal and lignite mining regions across Europe are already experiencing the impact from coal plant retirements and mine closures,

Acknowledging the inter-linkage between the Paris Agreement, the International Labor Organization's "Guidelines for a Just Transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all", and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Underlining the need to integrate the notion of just transition horizontally into the European decision-making process, and recognizing the important role of the new Multiannual Financial Framework in this process,

we hereby affirm our commitment towards the Forum of Mayors on Just Transition as a powerful mechanism for coordination and cooperative action between mayors and local leaders and:

We encourage national governments to engage in transparent and inclusive dialogue with all regional stakeholders in lignite/mining regions in order to prepare transition plans and include them in energy, climate and sustainable development strategies.

We recognize that local communities have to be included in all transition processes from the beginning.

We underline the importance of transparency and consultation with local governments in the European Commission's "Coal Regions in Transition Platform" initiative and the need for expanding to include more regions, while also strengthening its institutional capacity by including more stakeholders from the civil society and trade unions,

We urge that appropriate mechanisms are made available at the national and European levels for capacity building and to ensure direct access and scaled-up financial support for the implementation of just transition, including provisions for the workers, enhancing the adaptive capacity of local communities and shifting the local and regional economies towards sustainable economic activities,

We welcome the proposal of the European Union institutions for a Just Transition Fund, under the condition that it will be adequately funded and will be used exclusively for the support of local communities and the development of sustainable economic activities and jobs creation in coal and lignite mining regions, noting that it should not replace existing funds for the just transition, but should complement them and seed further European and national financing,

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We call on the European Council, the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Energy Community to strengthen their support for just transition, so that coal regions benefit more directly from European funding.

We commit ourselves to continued action, at the local level on just transition and to supporting each other in creating a sustainable future for the benefit of all our citizens.

Adopted unanimously in September 2019 in the city of Weisswasser/O.L., Germany and declared by: