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Association for Energy Transition

**Declaration on energy restructuring
in cities**

The **Association for Energy Transition**, in accordance with its founding mission to add to the debate on the best energy model for our country, now considers it necessary to make a declaration of intent and a proposal letter for energy transition in the cities.

Cities are the essential nucleus of territorial action to have an orderly, fair and efficient transition process. It is where more than half of global energy is consumed (64%) and where 70% of greenhouse gas emissions are produced. As urban geography spreads, the risk of greater environmental imbalance increases, which means that action must be taken to achieve the climate objectives established in successive international summits, gradually incorporated into the policies of different countries and supranational bodies such as the European Union.

There are several action points to reduce the carbon footprint while, at the same time, being efficient with other resources, especially to lower the water footprint:

- 1. The first is, of course, transport and mobility.** Reports, such as the International Energy Agency's "Energy Technology Perspectives", underline the extent to which early action to encourage electric mobility, bicycling, and public transport could save up to \$21 billion by 2050 as well as dramatically reducing CO² emissions. In the same vein, the European Union has worked to increase the use of renewable energies to 10% of energy consumption in the transport sector for 2020, an objective that is close to being met, but not without major gaps still to be filled.
Sustainable mobility means electrification, which means strengthening the electricity distribution network, installation of charging infrastructure for vehicles which, for the most part, will be shared, and the establishment of "logistical centres" to streamline and make more efficient the freight transport network and delivery of products to small and medium-sized businesses and also to private homes.
- 2. Second, renewable energy generation located within the cities themselves.** In this sense, an objective to be reached is decentralization of generation by interweaving a network of small generation centres for both self-consumption and distributed generation. To do this, it is necessary to guarantee legal certainty and have transparent and substantial information to be able to make decisions, with the calculation of economic returns, energy savings, and installation and maintenance costs being essential. This movement based on the power of "energy data" is key to the development of intelligent infrastructures and networks ("smart grid") capable of instantly coordinating supply and demand signals.
- 3. Third, it is key to promote energy restructuring in housing** but sensibly and looking for synergies with the consumption of other basic raw materials: recycling and reuse of waste, efficient water consumption, among others. This

process must be done in accordance with scientifically proven best practices by implementing advanced technologies that today are already producing significant energy savings, as is the case with the heat pump.

4. **Fourth, in terms of public policy, what is being called the “Urban Agenda”** (inaugurated in the Pact of Amsterdam in 2016) will deserve this name if it is based on a transformation plan that is decentralized, bottom-up, realistic, economically viable and socially acceptable for cities. That is, environments that work with an efficient view of mobility, where technology is the key variable but without prior discrimination between techniques or technologies. This is because you cannot be so arrogant as to select *ex ante* something that is questionable as to how it will work in the future, or whether another technology will come sooner that will render the previous ones obsolete. “Technological determinism” has never produced socially positive results. For example, one of the aspects on which the “Urban Agenda” should focus is to lead by example with the facilities and goods belonging to public administrations. In this sense, plans for energy efficiency and reduced consumption in public buildings or restrictions on the massive use of official vehicles that pollute are important aspects in creating “moral authority” with which to call for greater efforts from the private sector.

5. **Finally, it is necessary to strengthen coordination and collaboration between the different administrative levels and among cities across the globe** to achieve objectives more efficiently. In particular, forums like the C40 are even more necessary in the current era to follow examples from cities that were ahead of the curve, such as Aspen, Burlington, Copenhagen, San Diego or Vancouver.

For our Association, all these changes must be carried out with an extremely high level of consultation and participation from civil society, leaving aside any *a priori* technological assumptions, and placing the consumer and citizen at the centre of any decision-making process.

This is a process that not only lies at the epicentre of public debate as a result of clear evidence of global warming, but also has enormous disruptive potential on key issues of everyday life, such as transport, climate conditioning in homes, the ability to move freely, the way life is organized in urban environments, etc., and therefore **nothing can nor should be done behind the citizens’ backs.**



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