

Andreas Wolter  
Bürgermeister der Stadt Köln



5. November 2019

President of the European Commission  
President of the European Parliament,

Our citizens, especially the young generation (FFF), are the ones who ask for more climate action in their cities to protect natural resources for their future. I must admit they are very right. This is why the City of Cologne and myself personally, is taking steps towards a more climate friendly city development.

I very much support the idea of „Ride with us“ – visiting the COP every year, since it took place in Copenhagen. We need the public relation this give to the topic climate change. I am proud to receive the group in Cologne and exchange ideas on the Climate topic.

The urgency of the climate crisis requires immediate action, stepping up our climate ambition and pursuing every effort to keep global temperature rise below 1.5°C by mid-century, as evidenced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C. Current energy and climate policies in place globally, set the planet on a global warming pathway of 3°C. We are reminded of the inadequacy of our response to climate change, by the thousands of young people demonstrating each week on the streets of European cities - and around the world. We cannot let the status quo jeopardise their future and those of millions of European citizens. We owe it to the next generation to make more ambitious commitments to address climate change at all levels of government and in every aspect of European policy-making. We acknowledge and support the positions of the European Parliament and of the Commission to pursue net-zero emissions as the only viable option for the future of Europe and the world. Now, we believe that the European Council has a unique opportunity to deliver this vision.

As Chair of Climate Alliance I also like to draw your attention to the letter, we agreed on between the big cities networks and presented this to the EU council in 2019.

„We ask you to step up the EU’s climate commitments, to show global leadership and drive ambition to make appropriate and rapid progress in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

We urge you to:

- Develop a just and inclusive European long-term climate strategy that enhances resilience and ensures emissions in the EU peak by 2020, more than halve by 2030 and reach net-zero by 2050;
- Enhance the 2030 EU climate and energy targets and Nationally Determined Contribution to ensure a resilient, rapid and just energy transition in line with the above goals;
- Align the next EU long-term budget with this strategy, remove fossil fuel subsidies and mainstream climate action as a priority across all funding programs; and
- Commit all member states to binding net-zero emissions reduction targets and the above goals“

Best regards

Andreas Wolter  
Vice Mayor