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World mayors commit to climate action at COP17 in Durban

Durban, South Africa – World mayors made a commitment to tackling climate change at local level during [COP17-CMP7](#) in Durban this week. More than 100 mayors signed an agreement to get climate change onto mainstream city hall agendas.

The Durban Adaptation Charter notes that cities are at the coalface when it comes to responding to the impact of climate change. While governments drag their feet, it was agreed that cities can draft laws and regulations to curb greenhouse gas emissions.



Mayor James Nxumalo will hand the Durban Adaptation Charter, signed by 114 world mayors, to COP17 negotiators.
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“Sadly, there is no credible indication that our nations are able to reach a global deal at the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17),” David Cadman, deputy mayor of Vancouver, Canada, said.

Canada has won several “[Fossil of the Day](#)” awards at COP17 for its perceived lack of commitment to addressing the issues of climate change.

“Our cities can’t wait for the COP17 parties. We are at the topping point of winning or losing the battle against climate change. We, the governments closest to the people, know that we need to take collective action now,” said Cadman.

South Africa’s President Jacob Zuma, who attended the COP17 mayoral convention, said: “Municipalities in the developing world must not wait for surprise flooding, extreme drought or fires. We need to investigate today for a safer tomorrow by prioritizing the establishment of disaster management structures.”

Durban and eThekweni municipality Mayor James Nxumalo is scheduled to hand over a copy of the Durban charter to COP17 delegates. In September Nxumalo, an advocate for climate change mobilization and action especially in Africa, became the 76th member of the [World Mayors Council on Climate Change](#) (WMCCC) when he was inducted by Bonn mayor and Council vice chairman Jürgen Nimptsch.

Nxumalo emphasized ahead of COP17 the need for African local governments to make their voices heard at the Conference of the Parties. He has acknowledged that cities, like Durban, are at the frontline of climate change response; and that adaptation, as a focus, is crucial.

All 114 signatory mayors are members of the World Mayors Council, which is committed to responsibly tackling climate change issues.