



AS/Soc/PHSD/INF (2021) 02
13 January 2021
Asocdocphsdinf02_2021

Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development
Sub-Committee on Public Health and Sustainable Development
Programme

Round Table on “Representative democracy against climate crisis”

**Joint contribution of the Parliamentary Assembly
and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
to the World Forum for Democracy
(on the KUDO platform)**

Monday 18 January 2021, from 9.30 am to 12 noon

The climate crisis poses unprecedented social, health and environmental challenges for our societies, and failure to ensure environmental justice will lead to conflicts and social upheavals. To ensure that everyone's right to healthy environment is respected and no one is left behind, attitudes and behaviours must change. Today we are facing a critical situation and inaction will have disastrous consequences for us all.

Elected officials at all levels and from across the political spectrum are ready to rise to this challenge, and to act decisively and consistently to tackle the climate overheating. They need to ensure that public institutions and the private sector function in a way that addresses environmental issues effectively and in accordance with the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Furthermore, climate resilience, as defined by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the ability of organisations to return to a normal state of functioning after a disaster, is crucial in these times. Parliaments and local and regional assemblies need to strengthen their own capacity to remain efficient in times of crisis.

9:30 am *Welcome and introduction by:*
Ms Jennifer De Temmerman, Chairperson of the PACE Sub-Committee on Public Health and Sustainable Development (France, ALDE)

9:35 am *Opening remarks by:*
Ms Gunn Marit Helgesen, Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Norway; EPP/CCE)
Mr Andreas Nick, Vice-Chairperson of PACE (Germany, EPP/CD)

Session 1: Elected to save the planet: The role and responsibility of elected representatives in combating climate change

9:50 am To what extent are elected representatives responsible for continued environmental damage, and how can they stop it? How can they be held accountable? How to strengthen their ability to effectively change environmental policy and practice? In this first session, the panellists will

discuss the roles and responsibilities of parliamentarians and locally elected representatives in combatting the climate crisis and strengthening the climate resilience of democratic institutions.

Moderator

Ms Edite Estrela, PACE Rapporteur on “The climate crisis and the rule of law” (Portugal, SOC)

Round table with the participation of:

Ms Jennifer De Temmerman, Chairperson of the PACE Sub-Committee on Public Health and Sustainable Development and Rapporteur on “Inaction on climate change – a violation of children’s rights” (France, ALDE)

Ms Gunn Marit Helgesen, Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Vice-President of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CRPM), Co-President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), First Vice-President of the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (Norway, EPP/CCE)

Mr George Papandreou, PACE Rapporteur on “More participatory democracy to tackle climate change” (Greece, SOC)

Mr Magnus Berntsson, President of the Assembly of European Regions, Vice-president of the Regional Council and Regional Minister for the Environment of the Västra Götaland Region (Sweden, EPP/CCE)

10:30 am

Questions and debate

The World Forum for Democracy’s “Deliberative Democracy for Climate” Campaign

10:40 am

Presentation by **Ms Mary Ann Hennessey**, Head of the Division for Democratic Innovation of the Council of Europe

Session 2: Turning words into deeds: challenges and opportunities of linking global, regional, national and local action

10:45 am

All Council of Europe member States are committed to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are signatories to the Paris Agreement. The European Green Deal is the EU plan to develop a sustainable economy. The second session of this Round Table will focus on the challenges and good practice examples of translating international and regional standards and commitments into action and delivering practical results at a national and local level.

Moderator:

Mr Vladimir Prebilib, Spokesperson of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on Climate Change and Environment (Slovenia, SOC/G/PD)

Round table with the participation of:

Mr Simon Moutquin, PACE Rapporteur on “Anchoring the right to a healthy environment: need for enhanced action by the Council of Europe” (Belgium, SOC)

Mr José Manuel Fernandes, member of the European Parliament and Vice-Chair of the Intergroup “Green New Deal” (Portugal, EPP)

Ms Sibel Arslan, PACE General Rapporteur on Local and Regional Authorities (Switzerland, SOC)

Ms Belinda Gottardi, member of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, CEMR Spokesperson on Climate, Administrator – Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy – Europe (Italy, SOC/G/PD)

Mr Mohamed Boudra, President of Local and City Governments United (CGLU), Mayor of Al Hoceima, President of the Moroccan Association of

Local Council Presidents (AMPCC), Deputy Head of the Moroccan Delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Morocco, NR)

11:30 **Questions and debate**

11:50 **Conclusions from:**
Ms Jennifer De Temmerman, Chairperson of the PACE Sub-Committee on Public Health and Sustainable Development (France, ALDE)

The event will be live-streamed.

Contacts at the Committee Secretariat / Parliamentary Assembly

Mr Guillaume Parent

Co-Secretary of the Committee

☎ +33 (0)3 88 41 23 63

guillaume.parent@coe.int

Ms Bogdana BUZARNESCU

Principal Assistant of the Committee

☎ + 33 (0)3 90 21 45 38

bogdana.buzarnescu@coe.int

Ms Ruth CATHERIN

Assistant for the
Congress of Regional and Local Authorities

☎ + 33 (0)3 90 21 45 52

ruth.catherin@coe.int