PRESS RELEASE
EU Climate Diplomacy Week: Four Mayors unite to confront climate change challenges amid rising urbanisation and population growth

Accra, 27 November 2023 – At a roundtable during the European Union (EU) Climate Diplomacy Week, Mayors and representatives from Accra, Tema, Sekondi-Takoradi, and Awutu Senya East join forces to address the pressing issue of climate change.

The roundtable, organised as part of the European Union Climate Diplomacy Week, saw the participation of distinguished local leaders, including Elizabeth Sackey, Mayor of Accra Metropolitan Assembly; Anita Love Obo Amissah, Municipal Chief Executive of Awutu-Senya East Municipal Assembly; Yohane Amarah Ashitey, Mayor of Tema Metropolitan Assembly; and Innocent Haligah, Metropolitan Coordinating Director, Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly.

As rapid urbanisation and population growth continue to pose significant challenges, these visionary leaders who are members of the Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa initiative (CoM SSA) recognise the urgency and importance of collaborating to find sustainable solutions.

The Mayors intend to implement comprehensive strategies that combat climate change at the local level. This includes a focus on sustainable urban planning, green infrastructure development, energy efficiency, waste management, and adopting climate-smart technologies. The alliance highlights the shared commitment of these cities to prioritise environmental sustainability and improve the quality of life for their residents.

The European Union Climate Diplomacy Week is part of the annual global campaign launched by the European Union and its Member States to foster cooperation on climate change and inspire real action.

EU Ambassador in Ghana, Irchad Razaaly emphasised the European Union’s commitment to supporting Ghana’s cities in their journey toward sustainable development. "Today’s roundtable was a testament to our collective resolve in tackling climate challenges head-on. It’s crucial that these local insights and experiences from Ghana are brought forth at the upcoming COP28 to ensure global climate strategies resonate with local realities” he remarked.

Elizabeth Sackey, the first female Mayor of Accra, reflected on the event’s significance, saying, “This roundtable has been a powerful platform for us to unite our voices and concerns. As we approach
COP28, it’s clear that the challenges we face in Accra are shared by many, and together, we can advocate for meaningful global action and support.”

The event emphasised the need for innovative climate solutions and robust support systems, especially in climate finance and sustainable energy, but also increased investment in cities to fight against floods. **Yohane Amarth Ashitey, Mayor of Tema Metropolitan Assembly** noted, "Our cities are at the frontline of climate impacts; today's dialogue has reinforced the necessity for innovative approaches and enhanced support to tackle these challenges effectively."

Because young people care deeply about climate change and will be most impacted by it, Patience Agyekum, who will represent the youth of Ghana at COP28 joined the last part of the meeting to include the youth.

Concluding with a consensus on key strategic messages, the roundtable set the stage for Ghana's representation at COP28, advocating for increased adaptation finance, sustainable energy solutions, drainage and waste collection system, and the amplification of locally-led climate initiatives. The discussions also highlight the importance of integrating climate action into the broader urban development agenda.

**Note to editors**

CoM SSA is the regional chapter of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM), the largest global initiative of cities addressing climate and energy challenges. This bottom-up initiative encourages cities to voluntarily set and achieve ambitious yet realistic climate and energy targets. **As of 2023, the network includes over 350 cities in Sub-Saharan Africa.**

Since January 2019, the initiative is co-funded by the European Union, the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID) with a total funding amount of €35.7 M, providing in-depth support to cities in 14 countries, including Ghana. It is jointly implemented by four European Member State Organizations: GIZ, AECID, AFD and Expertise France.

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