



Press

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Europe's small towns call for an ever closer solidarity

Brussels, April the 6th 2020

As the COVID-19 pandemic has been hitting Europe for the past weeks, the Confederation of Towns and Municipalities of Europe (CTME), chaired by **Roberto Pella**, expresses the demand from small towns of the European Union for an ever closer solidarity among European countries and peoples in such concerning times. The EU and the European Council in particular should be paving the way to an exemplary and historic step by focusing on allowing the necessary sanitary and financial means to directly irrigate our villages and peoples across the Continent. The last Council agreement allows to consider a short-term relieve of the pressure, without nonetheless giving municipalities and local authorities reasons to foresee the coming days with the required serenity and visibility.

Roberto Pella, President of the CTME: *“We cannot afford to waste more time. The situation is serious and cause for concern. The very idea of our Union is now on the line, and citizens must now, maybe more than ever in our Modern History, see the political ambitions of our EU for cohesion, progress and solidarity in their daily lives. The Confederation of Towns and Municipalities of Europe is ready to be part of any effort.”* President **Pella** also insisted in expressing his *“extreme gratefulness to the healthcare workers in the frontlines and to the many volunteers who have come forward during these hard times to ensure that the most fragile or isolated people get the help and attention they need. Without them, the situation would have been immensely more complex, as we lack critical institutional and financial tools.”*

“Europe can provide our communities with the leverage and the help they need, as Member States are currently under immense pressure. Our small towns have been on the frontline of this crisis, with very few means and resources. Achieving results will also depend upon the impetus the EU as a whole will be willing to give. We are desperately in need of one that would be targeted to the real economy, now more than ever” **Tugdual Le Lay**, General Secretary, reacted.

For the CTME, there cannot be divisions among the Members of the European Union upon such a common challenge as the one posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of health and socio-economic responses. Easing loans cannot be the sole answer. Lives are on the line, as the very existence of essential public services and the livelihood of many small enterprises, crucial to the vitality of many towns and municipalities across Europe.

Such a tragedy never comes in the right time; but now is the time for an unconditional solidarity among Europeans, as well as for resources to express it meaningfully.



CONFEDERATION OF TOWNS AND MUNICIPALITIES OF EUROPE

CONFÉDÉRATION DES PETITES VILLES DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE

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