



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

PRESS RELEASE

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A convention to decarbonise International Geneva

2050Today, UNIGE, SIG and the local and federal authorities have signed a convention to drastically reduce the CO₂ emissions of International Geneva's institutions.



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United for zero emissions

The United Nations (UN) wants to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and International Geneva must set an example without delay. This is the objective of 2050Today. Launched in 2020 by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN in Geneva, this initiative has created a network that already includes more than sixty permanent missions, international organisations and non-governmental organisations. This project has now reached a new stage with the signing of a convention between the University of Geneva (UNIGE), the Services industriels de Genève (SIG), the City of Geneva, the Republic and Canton of Geneva and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). With this signature, 2050Today officially becomes a Climate Action Forum for Geneva and will benefit from regular financial support over three years.

Promoting actions and projects to drastically reduce the carbon footprint of International Geneva. This is the objective of the [2050Today](#) initiative, which already brings together 65 institutions ranging from permanent missions to international organisations and various entities from civil society. This community, created in partnership with the United Nations, aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. This is a realistic goal since the reorganisation that took place in 2020 due to the pandemic resulted in a 50% reduction in the average value of emissions per employee compared to 2019, without threatening the efficiency of these organisations' operations.

A key milestone

Wednesday 8 June 2022 marks a key milestone in the recognition and pursuit of the goal of zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Republic and Canton of Geneva, the City of Geneva, the University of Geneva (UNIGE) and the Services industriels de Genève (SIG) signed a Cooperation Agreement establishing 2050Today as the Geneva Climate Action Forum for the benefit of International Geneva. The agreement will run for three years and is renewable. The Swiss Confederation and UNIGE will provide support through the provision of staff. The Canton will support 2050Today with CHF 100,000 per year and the City and SIG with CHF 50,000 per year each.

Sharing experience and expertise

"This new cooperative setting brings together federal and local authorities. It aims to further engage International Geneva as a

major centre of multilateralism in its contribution to the climate change challenge, and to use the synergies of the respective climate plans of both the parties to the Convention and each of the member institutions,” says Jean-Pierre Reymond, Executive Director of 2050Today. The consortium will now be attached to UNIGE, which will provide academic expertise, while SIG will provide technical expertise and experience.

“2050Today is an ideal opportunity to demonstrate that determined action at the local level can have a significant impact at the global level. This project is perfectly in line with the ambitions of the University of Geneva, for the role it plays within the International Geneva ecosystem, but also for its resolute action towards a rapid and global ecological transition”, says Yves Flückiger, Rector of UNIGE.

Projects for action

2050Today has already begun to develop significant joint projects with its members to reduce CO₂ emissions in various sectors. These include transforming 100 buildings to make them sustainable without relying on fossil fuels, or implementing new paradigms for both land and air mobility, by changing practices and providing innovative solutions. The impact of food is also taken into account through new practices that emit less. Finally, digital technology is not left out, as it is proposed to obtain a label for digital responsibility. These projects will require additional financial support from donor institutions.



From left to right: Tatiana Valovaya, Jürg Lauber, Yves Flückiger, Antonio Hodggers and Alfonso Gomez.

High resolution pictures

First important meeting

The signing of the convention was part of the first high-level meeting of 2050Today. The signatories were respectively Jürg Lauber, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva, Antonio Hodggers, State Councillor in charge of the Department of the Territory, Alfonso Gomez, Administrative Councillor in charge of the Department of Finance, Environment and Housing, Yves Flückiger, Rector of the University of Geneva, and Vincent Collignon, Executive Director of Clients at SIG.

United by this common goal of climate action, the ambassadors, directors and secretaries general of the 2050Today member institutions confirmed their commitment to decarbonising International Geneva. Tatiana Valovaya, Director General of the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), Marie Chantal Rwakazina, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda and Ion Sauca, Acting General Secretary of the World Council of Churches signed the Convention as witnesses of International Geneva.

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Ms Valovaya said she was “convinced that the climate crisis can only be tackled effectively through multilateral and coordinated action. Through its determined and measurable action in cooperation with the host authorities, 2050Today can become a decisive example of this.”

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