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## **Cities yearning for partnerships for a smart, resilient and green future**

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport hosts a thematic session on cities during the 2021 P4G Seoul Summit.

The 2021 P4G Seoul Summit, the international forum for discussing climate actions and green recovery after COVID-19, held on May 30 to 31, 2021.

During the summit, Minister Noh Hyeong-ouk of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of Korea hosted a virtual meeting on May 31 to discuss ideas for realizing carbon neutrality in cities and promoting private-public partnerships to make it a reality.

Planned as one of the sessions on water, energy, food & agriculture, cities, and circular economy, the five key theme areas targeted by the SDGs, the city forum was dealing with Partnerships for Smart and Resilient Green Cities focused on the climate actions cities can take to tackle climate and highlighted the role of public-private partnerships in implementation of the actions.

In his keynote speech, Minister Noh presented smart city as the platform that will help cities build a future where humans coexist with nature in harmony. He also emphasized the role of public-private partnerships in making carbon neutral cities, another key topic covered at the session.

As for reasons for promoting smart city, Minister Noh elaborated how smart city can transform urban space, transportation and infrastructure and how these changes will gradually reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in cities to 'net-zero.' While praising the smart city, the minister also reminded how people should remain at the center of the transition to carbon neutrality.

Following the minister's speech, Flemming Møller Mortensen, Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark, shared Copenhagen's experience since its declaration to become the world's first carbon neutral city by 2025.

Recalling the life in Copenhagen a decade ago, the Danish minister said people could not go out swimming or skiing due to air pollution. But after its decision to go green, the minister mentioned, people in Copenhagen can now enjoy outdoor activities in all weathers and seasons. He also added that it were the alliances forged for the city that drove the fundamental change.

At the P4G HUB-led session on e-mobility and green building, keynote remarks delivered by Mr. Daniel Gomez, Deputy Minister for National Planning of Colombia, and Ms. Cristina Gamboa, CEO of the World Green Building Council, were followed by a panel discussion.

Panelists urged forming of innovative partnerships, citing examples of successful partnerships like the Race to Zero Campaign by the UNFCCC, which leveraged the global alliance to end coal-fired power generation or the launch of the Colombia Green Building Council to prod the construction industry toward sustainability.

During a panel session on smart city, organized by the Korea Agency for Infrastructure Technology Advancement(KAIA) and moderated by Professor Kim Do-nyun of the Sungkyunkwan University,

panelists including Mr. Park Chul, Vice President of Hyundai Motors Groups, and Mr. Jorge Saravia, Vice President of the Digital Town Europe, exchanged thoughts and answered questions from the viewers who accessed the session.

Representing diverse sectors of smart city, the panelists introduced innovative technologies and solutions emerging in the private sector like zero-energy building, FCEV, on-demand mobility services, and smart data hub. They also proposed new leadership and governance model for building smart and resilient green cities.

The P4G thematic session on cities left its mark on the global fight against climate change in three ways. First, the summit built the global consensus that it takes the efforts of all stakeholders to tackle climate change. While the state and sub-state actors provide investments and policy guidance for early-stage technological development, businesses should also finance solutions to deliver net-zero future. As for the civil society, people should remain actively engaged in creating new ideas and monitoring the progress of the climate actions or pledges made by the governments or businesses.

Second, the session showed how successful emission-reduction efforts in Korea, Denmark, and Kenya like the introduction of green bus fleet, green building, urban renewal and smart city development can be replicated in other countries, including the developing ones.

Third, the city session, as expressed in the Seoul Declaration, shed a light on the pioneering role that smart city can play in urban climate actions by expanding green mobility options and digital infrastructure.

For the host country itself, its strong advocacy for green growth and carbon neutrality throughout the 2021 P4G Seoul Summit reaffirmed Korea's leadership on global climate issues.