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Providing a future for the next generation

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In light of advancing climate change, creating a climate resilience strategy in Germany, Europe and around the world is essential for coming generations. A strategy of this kind demands change in society and the economy towards a sustainable lifestyle and production methods. Scientists from the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and of Social Sciences will debate how this can be achieved, along with experts and young people from European cities and regions, at the European Climate Resilience Summit to be held in Vienna on August 28 and 29. The Bertelsmann Stiftung, the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the European Academies Science Advisory Council are conference partners. The conference will conclude with a Call to Action and an appeal to set up networks and to shape that change.

The aim of the climate conference is to give a voice to local actors, and young people in particular. The intention is for local communities and a wide range of interest groups to be drawn into debate and decision-making processes, to swap experiences and to set up networks that can act proactively on a wide scale and locally. "Innovative and far-reaching measures for protecting the climate must be developed and implemented in overarching solution consortia in Europe's cities, districts and regions. Only then will future generations have the opportunity, not only to perceive and comprehend the risks, but also to surmount them," says Bertelsmann Stiftung Executive Board Chair Brigitte Mohn, who will participate in the conference.

The mayors of major European cities have been invited to the event, as they are the people who bear responsibility at ground level and who must assess and deal with the risks. They include Michael Ludwig, the mayor of Vienna, Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo, Bologna Mayor Matteo Lepore, Ricardo Rio, the mayor of Braga, and Cologne Mayor Henriette Reker. The Bertelsmann Stiftung will provide its skills as a partner in funding and expertise.

The Climate Resilience Strategy rests on three pillars. The first pillar – cutting global warming – has to date been at the focus. Added to this is the second pillar: the recognition that humanity and its living environment will have to adapt to conditions of climate change, as it can no longer be halted. The third pillar is societal change towards increased sustainability. "Societal change means a fundamental change in the values and behaviour of people towards greater global sustainability," Brigitte Mohn says.

Intergenerational responsibility starts today by placing young people at the centre of the conference. Strong youth participation is an integral element of the event. Twelve workgroups will develop recommendations for action that will be passed in plenary session as a Call to Action. This Call to Action is intended to draw up a global agenda for change with multiple partners and allies for young people to make their visions and solutions for healthy living achievable.

About the Bertelsmann Stiftung: Moving people. Shaping the future.

The Bertelsmann Stiftung is committed to ensuring that everyone is able to participate in society – whether politically, economically or culturally. Our programme: education and the next generation, democracy and cohesion, digitization and the common good, Europe's future, health, and a sustainable social market economy. The Bertelsmann Stiftung was founded as a charitable organization by Reinhard Mohn in 1977.

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