

**Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray**  
Chief Minister  
Maharashtra



Mantralaya  
Mumbai-400 032

**Statement of Shri Uddhav Balasheb Thackeray**  
**Chief Minister of Maharashtra**  
**Colaba Conversations-2021**

**Welcome to Colaba Conversations 2021.**

As we gather today, the world along with India, Maharashtra, and Mumbai are on a slow path to recovery. Our homes, offices, streets, and cities are continuously evolving. All of us are slowly becoming a part of a new world that transitions past the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The main question we must ask is: how can we incorporate the lessons of the past two years into this new world we are creating? How can we ensure that going forward, we priorities sustainability, inclusivity, and equity?

The pandemic has demonstrated to us the importance of strong institutions. This is especially true of cities. Everywhere in the world, local governments have been the most proactive in engaging with the day-to-day challenges of COVID-19. They have been the most accountable to citizens. Strong city responses have strengthened state-level response, and strong states have strengthened countries.

Cities, for their part, have learnt from each other. This is true beyond the pandemic too. Mumbai has recently faced two unprecedented cyclones due to the impact of climate change. Responding to these events required the city to learn from global ideas and best practices. It also chose to take its response to the next level by becoming a part of C40, a network of cities worldwide collaborating on climate action.

Mumbai has an opportunity to chart a new path for what effective climate action and net-zero means. Its example will be meaningful not only for Indian cities, but also for coastal cities, and cities in the Global South. With its Climate Action Plan, Mumbai is intending to develop this vision further. The city is already looking to shape its blue economy, create innovative urban spaces, and reimagine urban energy and mobility.

To ensure inclusivity, Mumbai is ensuring that all perspectives are incorporated in the planning process. To promote equity, Mumbai is creating mentorship opportunities for women climate leaders in the city. In this way, the city is extending the climate agenda to consider the Sustainable Development Goals as a whole.

The Government of Maharashtra is doing its part to support Mumbai as well. Our new Electric Vehicle Policy and the constitution of the State Council for Climate Change are some of the initiatives helping cities like Mumbai achieve the SDGs faster.

We are committed to these efforts as we believe that the outcome of the Decade of Action will be defined by what our cities accomplish today. Just as Mumbai spearheaded India's economic growth in the 20th century, its current decisions will help define India's low-carbon trajectory in the 21st century. And these decisions are in fact the ones we are making today as we build a new post-pandemic world together.

As we have learnt over the past two years, though, decisions cannot be made by different stakeholders in silos. Citizens need to gather together and envision the future of the spaces they inhabit. Young people, who are slowly forming the majority of our population, must be given a voice and a stake in the conversation. Women and those from underprivileged communities must be given spaces to lead dialogue.

Colaba Conversations is one such commendable effort to bring the wider community together. It is making sure that we can all play a part in imagining the city and the world of tomorrow. With that, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the dignitaries, speakers and delegates to Colaba Conversations 2021.

Jai Hind.  
Jai Maharashtra