

CITY DIPLOMACY AGAINST THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE THREAT: U20 CASE STUDY

KÜRESEL İKLİM DEĞİŞİKLİĞİ TEHDİDİNE KARŞI ŞEHİR DIPLOMASISI: U20
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Abstract

City diplomacy has turned to new searches in the 21st century to get results especially in the fight against global climate change, while it had a lower profile application area in international relations in the 20th century. The research question of this article, by focusing on the age of transboundary crises is to examine why cities need to be involved in solving global problems and their capacity to contribute in the Urban 20 (U20) U20 case study. This study aims to contribute to the international relations city diplomacy literature by examining U20 with the case study method. The biggest difference of the 21st century from previous centuries is that the problems are transboundary and global, as in the examples of global warming and the Corona pandemic, and the motivation to act jointly takes priority because no international organization, state or other actors can solve these problems alone. In this article, brief information about city diplomacy and international local diplomacy organizations is given at first, and then, it is concluded that cooperation between cities can be beneficial in combating global problems with multilayered stag hunt theory. It is also concluded that city diplomacy has a limited effect on international relations and does not have a legal sanction power.

Keywords: International Relations, City Diplomacy, G20, U20, Climate Change

Öz

Şehir diplomasisi, 20. yüzyılda uluslararası ilişkilerde daha düşük profilli bir uygulama alanına sahipken, 21. Yüzyılda özellikle küresel iklim değişikliği ile mücadelede sonuç almak için yeni arayışlara yönelmiştir. Bu makalenin araştırma sorusu, sınır aşan krizler çağına odaklanarak, şehirlerin küresel sorunların çözümüne neden dahil olmaları gerektiğini ve çözüme yönelik katkılarını Urban 20 (U20) vaka çalışması üzerinden analiz etmektir. Bu çalışma, G20 Ülkeleri tarafından teşkil edilen ve şehirleri kapsayan U20 organizasyonunu vaka çalışması yöntemiyle inceleyerek uluslararası ilişkiler şehir diplomasisi literatürüne katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. 21. Yüzyılın önceki yüzyıllardan en büyük farkı, küresel ısınma ve Corona pandemisi örneklerinde olduğu gibi sorunların küresel ve sınır aşan boyutu nedeniyle hiçbir uluslararası kuruluş, devlet veya herhangi bir aktörün tek başına çözemeyeceği gerçekliğinde ortak hareket etme motivasyonunu ön plana çıkarmasıdır. Bu çalışmada öncelikle şehir diplomasisi ve uluslararası yerel diplomasi teşkilatları hakkında özet bilgi verilmiş, müteakibinde geyik avı oyun teorisi ile şehirler arası iş birliğinin küresel sorunlarla mücadelede faydalı olabileceği sonucuna varılmıştır. Ancak, şehir diplomasisinin uluslararası ilişkiler üzerinde sınırlı bir etkiye sahip olduğu ve yasal yaptırım gücünün olmadığı da varılan sonuçlar arasındadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası İlişkiler, Şehir diplomasisi, G20, U20, İklim değişikliği

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INTRODUCTION

Most of the International Relations scholars do not accept cities as relevant actors (Raffaale,2021:7). City diplomacy has become popular in the 21st century, and mayors have engaged on global problems such as the climate change crisis and gotten the opportunity to share their voices on the international stage. For example, the UN Conference of the Parties (COP) acknowledged the need to broaden stakeholders together with subnational governments (Joana, 2015). City diplomacy driven by local authorities has become an important instrument to construct an urban agenda on the international level (Joana). Local and central administrations' foreign policy agenda are interlinked in some cases. Cities should implement both introvert and extrovert approaches similar to the Janus metaphor. On the one hand, cities have to cope with local problems. On the other hand, they have to take care of global warming, climate change, energy crisis, and food crisis which necessitate thinking and acting together on the international scene.

The theme of the 7th World Congress of Political Science to be held on 15-19 July 2023 in Argentina is "Politics in the Age of Transboundary Crises: Vulnerability and Resilience" (IPSA, 2023). In the digitalized world following the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, cooperation, technology sharing, and exchange of experience and best practices have gained great importance. International actors are expected to develop new strategic approaches that address the short, medium and long-term crises and the shortcomings pointed out during the pandemic period.

In this study, after giving theoretical information about city diplomacy, a brief explanation is made about international local diplomacy organizations. When important international organizations and networks such as G20, U20, C40, UCLG, Eurocities are examined, it is understood that they offer new perspectives on problems and their approach to economic, environmental-social issues are compatible with the organizations that support them. The evolution of the international organizations of city diplomacy before and after 2000, especially in the struggle against the global climate change crisis, with the networks and platforms supported by the UN has also been analyzed. In the 21st century, thematic worldwide networks and city diplomacy initiatives have greatly contributed to the international visibility of cities. The C40 network and the U20 initiative stand out in this context.

G20 is composed of 19 countries, in addition to the EU, which are the world's most industrialized economies, and it represents both 85% of the world's GDP and 75% of the international trade (OECD, 2022). This also means that G20 countries have more responsibilities than other countries because they cause more damages to the ozone layer than other states. Even though G20 countries have different threat perceptions in their strategic national security documents, there is one problem namely global climate change crisis arises in because each of them has been affected badly and this necessitates acting together for the reason that the problem is too complicated to handle alone.

2. THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

International relations give priority to military security concerns and subnational actors' activities have a lower comparative importance, supposing foreign and local policies are different areas of responsibility (Hocking,1996). In principle, international agreements and initiatives done within the city diplomacy scope through international organizations and foreign entities, do not fall into the ambit of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (Setzer, 2015). A few states have constitutionalized international capabilities to delegate explicitly for subnational authorities, for example France has allowed them to engage international cooperation or development agreements with other foreign subnational local entities since 2007

(Setzer). Likewise, Argentina included a “para diplomacy clause” in its constitutional reform of 1994 related to Argentinian provinces’ international relations (Setzer). Federal governments like the USA and Belgium have a tendency to give more autonomy to local authorities in their foreign affairs (Bursens ve Deforche, 2010). It is noteworthy that the *First World Conference on City Diplomacy* was held in 2008 (Sizoo et al, 2008). Keith Whitmore said that they were the first international organization to produce a report on city diplomacy at the opening of the conference, and Onno Van Veldhuizen stated that city diplomacy had been implemented for many years yet without realizing it (Council of Europe, 2008). In practice, even concerning the climate change problem, abnormal tensions between the state and federal level are apt to raise concerning common administrative common response (LaMotte et al, 2009). Despite the US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, 12 state governors (both Republicans and Democrats) refused to withdraw from the treaty, forming the United States Climate Alliance, and more than 400 mayors ratified the treaty (Alvaraez, 2020). South Africa and Brazil prefer to constrain city diplomacy through putting constitutional limitations or not defining open constitutional provisions (Nganje, 2014). The issues between local administrations and the central administration are regulated both in the Constitution and by laws.

The theory of “Stag hunt” is introduced to the literature by Rousseaux. Hunting the rabbit which is smaller and less valuable than a stag is possible for individual hunters without cooperation, but cooperation and a joint strategy to hunt the stag is necessary, and its reward is greater (Skyrms, 2003). When two neighbors can make a consensus in order to drain a joint meadow, they should also keep in mind that if one fails in his/her part the whole project will fail (Hume, 2017). For both neo-realists and neoliberals, there is always the possibility of compromise between states. According to the deer-hunting game theory, the total profit can be realized at the highest level by seeing the whole picture. For this, it is of great importance to carry out the coordination and trust dilemma and the security dilemma simultaneously. According to deer hunting game theory, countries' own interests can be compared to rabbits (Skyrms, 2003), and we can state that this assumption is not fully valid in the current international conjuncture. Neoliberal institutionalists, on the other hand, drew attention to the importance of institutions and emphasized the importance of institutions for cooperation. The globalizing world has in fact brought with the result of expressing threats and problems globally. The fact that threats and risks take on a global character with globalization necessitates deer hunting game theory, especially in the 21st century, to set aside ideology, belief and all kinds of differences and reach a solution together. I want to use this game theory in local-national-global cooperation against climate change threat/challenge.

The situation of cities in foreign policy is an area that needs to be studied. For Kuznetsov, “The most comprehensive analysis of paradiplomacy can be produced in the qualitative methodology paradigm, and the case study research strategy seems the most appropriate and feasible in this matter.” (2014:153). In this Article, U20 and its communiques published so far are investigated through case study and qualitative content analysis method. One of the organizations established within the scope of the increasing visibility of cities in international relations is U20. Brief information about Eurocities and the European Charter of Local Self-Government is also given in the article in chronological order of establishment.

It is aimed to contribute to the literature by analyzing the prominent themes in the U20 declarations with a comparative case study respectively. Five Communiques for the years 2018-2022 published at the end of U20 Summits have been analyzed comparatively. In this vein, the themes of U20's both international relations and city diplomacy, from the 2018 Communique, which is the first year of its establishment, until the last Communique of 2022 have been analyzed. The COVID-19 pandemic, which was visible in 2020, and the Russia-Ukraine War

being in 2022 come to the fore as important international relations issues concerning this study's time scope.

3- INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/LEGISLATION

In the globalizing world, the tendency towards participatory and creative strategies has increased due to the fact that the problems are so large that states cannot solve them within their own means, and international relations are carried out simultaneously and multidimensional. Especially since problems such as the climate change crisis have become a problem not only for central governments, but also for city governments, new approaches and strategies are sought.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, the role and the influence of city governments in international diplomacy have the role and the influence of city governments in international diplomacy have been more important in this field in this direction. To become a member of the U20 network, cities mostly are from a member of the G20 state, but some are also members of UCLG and C40, thus UCLG, C40, Eurocities and European Treaty of Local Authorities are also briefly analyzed in this article in addition to U20.

3.1. United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

UCLG Organization was founded in line with the recommendation taken at the 1996 Istanbul UN HABITAT II Conference, following the merger of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), United Cities Organization (FMCU/UTO) and the World Metropolitan Association (METROPOLIS) in 2004. The organization was founded in Paris. UCLG is one of the most important representatives of the international local government movement that started in 1913. The Organization aims to ensure that local governments make international decisions, contribute to local development and increase their international visibility.

Its headquarters are in Barcelona. The official languages of the institution are English, Spanish and French. There are thousands of local government members from 140 countries. The Presidency of the World Organization is carried out by the President, 6 Co-Presidents, 2 Treasurers and the Secretary General World Organization has a total of nine subunits, seven regional, one metropolitan and one regional. These units are as follows: Africa (UCLG – Africa), Asia – Pacific (UCLG – ASPAC), Eurasia (UCLG – Eurasia), Europe (CEMR), Middle East and West Asia (UCLG-MEWA), Latin America (CORDIAL), North America (UCLG) – NORAM), METROPOLIS and the Forum of the Regions (UCLG – Region). Besides, UCLG World Organization has five categorical memberships. These memberships are local government, regional organization, international organization, affiliated membership and honorary membership.

3.2. Eurocities

Established in 1986 under the leadership of the cities of Barcelona, Birmingham, Frankfurt, Lyon, Milan and Rotterdam, Eurocities today brings together more than 130 local governments of Europe's biggest cities and 40 sister cities (Eurocities, 2022). Eurocities, whose main aim is to highlight that the democratic inclusion of local authorities can play in the multilayered governance structure, also aims to shape the opinions of the stakeholders in Brussels, thereby shifting the focus of EU legislation in a direction that can help city governments deal with important challenges at the local level.

Eurocities, which organizes thematic forums, many working groups, projects, activities and events, provides an environment for its members to share information and ideas. Forums take place in the fields of culture, economy, environment, information society, mobility, social affairs and cooperation, and working groups work on sub-fields of these concepts (Eurocities,

2022). Eurocities is the coordinator or partner of many projects which are funded by the European Union, prepared in different areas, and including member cities (Eurocities, 2013). There are four categories for Eurocities Membership (Eurocities, 2013). Full members consist of cities of both EU and European Economic Area member states. Full members are entitled to participate in all Eurocities events. Since only EU member cities are full members and Eurocities is a regional organization, we can deduce that it has limited influence in city diplomacy.

3.3. European Charter of Local Self-Government

The European Charter of Local Self-Government, or European Treaty of Local Authorities, is a decentralized agreement opened for signature by the Council of Europe and guaranteeing the autonomy of local governments from the central authority. In this context, the studies on the preparation of the requirement started in the first half of the 1980s within the Council of Europe. The Charter was opened for signature on October 15, 1985, for the countries to be parties and entered into force on September 1, 1988. The Charter, which is the first universal text accepted in the context of local governments, aims to strengthen the development of local and regional democracy. The Charter, which determines common norms among the signatories, aims to protect the rights of local and regional governments and obliges the implementation of the determined common principles. The principles of the Charter are subjects such as the working conditions of elected administrators, the nature and limit of administrative control, the resource autonomy of local governments, the principles of cooperation and solidarity between local governments and central administrations, and the provision of a judicial review. The articles that states can act freely to make reservations are shown separately, considering that the principles complement each other and taking into account their relevance to decentralization autonomy. The local self-government charter does not envisage an institutionalized system to monitor whether or how the principles are applied, except that the legislative measures taken by states to implement the principles of the charter are reported to the Council from time to time. The last part of the Charter covers the rules regarding the conditions of implementation and validity (Eurocities, 2022).

Article 2 of the Charter, entitled Constitutional and Legal Basis for Local Self-Governments, provides that the principle of autonomous local governments will be recognized by the constitution and national legislation, where appropriate (Eurocities, 2022). To give an example, the abolition of the tutelage authority established by the Constitution on local governments and the granting of a fully authorized administrative authority to local governments have not been accepted by the Republic of Türkiye. Therefore, Türkiye has annotated and not approved some paragraphs. The provisions that Türkiye has made reservations are generally those which seem abolishing the tutelage powers of the central administration.

3.4. C40

The C40 is an international city network that aims to raise awareness and take action on the climate change threat. There are approximately 100 cities in this network (C40, 2022). These cities correspond to an area that constitutes a quarter of the world economy in which more than 700 million people live. C40 Cities has regional offices in Africa, Asia, Europe, South America and North America. It is located in the European Region, together with cities such as Istanbul, London, Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, Milan, Athens (C40, 2022).

The C40 Network includes the chairmanship, executive committee, board of directors and partners within the governance mechanism. In the administrative hierarchy, the executive committee comes after the presidency. In the committee, a place is created with the participation

of 12 Mega Cities and 2 Innovative cities. In C40, the decisions are taken by a majority vote (C40, 2022). C40 leads cities to build relationships by creating subnets in many areas such as air quality monitoring, clean energy, water security, and emergencies (C40, 2022). The board of directors, on the other hand, is the structure that consists of a chairman and other administrative staff and ensures that the network is operational administratively. Partners are mostly from the business world. Among them, Bloomberg is important because it is the main partner (C40, 2022). The C40 Network is in the position of an important actor, both incorporating important cities in terms of opportunities and capabilities, and having the capacity to bring together important actors in taking joint actions against climate change. In addition, C40 has formed a task force to contribute to the struggle of cities by strengthening relations with member cities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The C40 provides affirmative action to women in presidential elections. If a woman is running for mayor, she can become mayor without an election. For example, the Mayor of Barcelona announced her candidacy for the Presidency of the European Region in the last elections and became the President.

3.5. Urban 20 (U20)

Recognizing the importance of cities, G20 countries established U20 on 12 December 2017 as a city diplomacy initiative. The U20 is an initiative convened by the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) and the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Representatives of both organizations attend the summit meetings. The Paris Agreement, within the scope of combating global climate change, was adopted in 2015 at the 21st Conference of the Parties held in Paris. Sustainable Development Goals have been officially implemented on 1 January 2016 for the next 15 years' global challenges as the 2030 Agenda under 19 goals by the UN (United Nations, 2016). "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (Goal 11) and "Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" (Goal 17) are related directly to city diplomacy. In the Goal 17 section, it is stated that inclusive partnerships among local, national, and the global level based on a "shared vision and shared goals" is required for a successful development (United Nations). Goal 1 reminds us of the "stag hunt" concept.

Following the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015 and the adoption of the sustainable development goals in 2016, U20 was created in 2017 as an initiative developed under the leadership of the Mayors of Buenos Aires and Paris, in collaboration with the C40 and UCLG. The U20 aims to develop a common attitude and contemporary messages to enrich the discussions of national leaders at the G20 Summit with unique urban perspectives.

Participating cities are selected according to the following criteria:

Being in a G20 country,

C40 and UCLG membership (both capitals and other cities are considered),

City population and Gross Domestic Product (GDP),

Leadership and participation in global issues,

Leadership and involvement in partner C40 and UCLG organizations

U20 member cities are shown in Table-1. Mostly countries are represented by one city, while the USA is represented by four and some countries by two. For example, while Turkish big cities such as Istanbul and Izmir represent the Republic of Türkiye, Rome and Milan represent Italy.

Table 1. U20 Member Cities

No	Countries	Cities
1.	Germany (G20)	Berlin
2.	USA (G20)	Los Angeles
		New York City
		Chicago
		Houston
3.	Argentina (G20)	Buenos Aires
4.	Australia (G20)	Sydney
5.	Brazil (G20)	Rio de Janeiro
		Sao Paulo
6.	China (G20)	Beijing
7.	Indonesia (G20)	Jakarta
8.	France (G20)	Paris
		Strasbourg
9.	South Africa (G20)	Johannesburg
		Durban
10.	South Korea (G20)	Seoul
11.	India (G20)	Mumbai
		Bengaluru
		Delhi
12.	England (G20)	London
13.	Italy (G20)	Milan
		Rome
14.	Japan (G20)	Tokyo
15.	Canada (G20)	Montreal
16.	Mexico (G20)	Mexico City
		Monterrey
17.	Russia (G20)	Moscow
18.	Saudi Arabia (G20)	Riyadh

19.	Republic of Türkiye (G20)	Istanbul
20.	Finland	Helsinki
21.	Holland	Amsterdam
		Rotterdam
22.	Spain	Madrid
		Barcelona
23.	Portugal	Lisbon

Cities in G20 countries that are important economic centers or population centers forming the U20 "Core Cities" group. Some non-G20 capitals and secondary cities may also be invited to join this formation as "Observer Cities also represented by the mayors. According to the figures of 2021, a total of 38 cities, 4 of which are observers, are located under the U20 platform. In addition, the U20 invites the organizations identified to support their work to become U20 partners. As a result of its work, the U20 presents a communique to the G20 governments each year, which includes recommendations from member cities. In this way, it recommends a roadmap to governments in order to prevent climate change, which is its main goal, and to produce joint solutions to develop sustainable economic development.

3.5.1. Communique of the Year 2018

The 2018 U20 Summit was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. 2018 Communique has 6 pages and it was signed by 24 cities and 10 cities with observer status: Beijing, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Chicago, Durban, Hamburg, Houston, Jakarta, Johannesburg, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Montreal, New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, São Paulo, Seoul, Tokyo, Tshwane, and Sydney (U20, 2018). In the introduction of this document, it is stated that cities themselves aim to present their information and advice as a common communique to the leaders of the G20 countries on global issues from climate change to social integration. In the conclusion part, it is stated that the synergy between global diplomacy and cities will continue to increase.

There are 17 articles in total under five headings in the text. It is stated under the first heading that the Paris Agreement accelerated the global change in the transition from fossil fuels to clean and renewable energy. This approach coincides with the global stag hunt concept. Because the swamp can only be resolved through global cooperation. In the first part, the localized version of SDG number 7 is expressed. Affordable homes near services such as education, healthcare, and clean, efficient and comfortable public transport have also been featured in the 2022 Communique. In the fourth section, food safety is emphasized and statements are included within the scope of SDG number 2 "Zero Hunger" and SDG number 12 "Responsible Consumption and Production". In the 16th article of the fifth section, there are statements about intercity cooperation in financing in order to overcome the problems that may arise due to the high costs of important infrastructure investments.

3.5.2. Communique of the Year 2019

The 2019 U20 Summit was held in Tokyo, Japan. Communique for 2019 is eight pages and was written during the Covid-19 pandemic (U20, 2019). This communique was signed by a total of 24 cities and 6 cities with observer status: Berlin, Buenos Aires, Chicago, Durban, Hamburg, Houston, Jakarta, Johannesburg, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Montreal, New York, Osaka, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Roma, São Paulo, Seoul, Tokyo, Tshwane,

and Sydney. Unlike the previous one, although Beijing did not sign this communique, the total number of signatory cities was again 24 since Osaka did. In the first part, it is stated that cities not only contain more than half of the world's population, but also include buildings, transportation, energy consumption, water and waste management, food systems and industries. The reference to the existence of green and healthy streets in the energy transformation process is one of the examples within the scope of localization of SDGs specific to cities. Another localized example can be given as zero waste SDG target number 12, which is to have at least 70% waste incineration level by 2030. It is stated in the paper that automation increases socio-economic inequality, especially because it disables middle-income workers. In the last paragraph of the declaration, it is stated that the transition to carbon-free development can be realized through local and national policies through the renewal of social dialogue between employees, employers, civil society, cities, regions and national governments (U20, 2019).

3.5.3. Communique of the Year 2020

The 2020 U20 Summit was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The year 2020 Communique is eight pages and was written during the Covid-19 pandemic (U20, 2020). This communique was signed by a total of 24 cities and 14 cities with observer status: Barcelona, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Durban, Houston, Istanbul, Izmir, Jakarta, Johannesburg, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Montreal, New York, Osaka, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Riyadh, Rome, São Paulo, including Seoul, Strasbourg, Tokyo, and Tshwane. Unlike before, the total number of signatory cities is 25 although Chicago, Hamburg and Sydney did not sign. It is because Barcelona, Istanbul, Izmir and Strasbourg signed it. In the introduction part, along with the global climate crisis, Covid-19 has been stated as the most urgent crisis, and attention is drawn to the issue of dealing with the pandemic together with the social and economic crisis. In fact, it is stated in the text that the pandemic crisis should be seen as an opportunity, and that possible future threats can be mitigated by reinvesting in public health. The issue of ensuring everyone's access to the vaccine without any discrimination and that local governments work in coordination with the World Health Organization are included in the Communique. It is stated in the fourth article that health, education and public transportation systems are among the social infrastructure of the cities. Expressions within the scope of SDG number 12 "Responsible Consumption and Production," SDG number 6 "Clean Water and Sanitization" and SDG number 8 "Decent Work and Economic Growth" have been given in the Communique. (U20, 2020).

3.5.4. Communique of the Year 2021

The 2021 U20 Summit was jointly organized by the Italian cities of Rome and Milan. Communique of 2021 is six pages (U20, 2021). 25-member cities and 16 observer cities signed it. It has been emphasized in the statement that the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the importance of solidarity between cities and that no one should be left behind in this context. In the introduction part of the text, it is emphasized that local activities should take place in the international arena. In the declaration, the cities of SDG 11 and SDG 17, which are directly two SDGs, are clearly stated in general and unlike other declarations. The communique, which states that mayors and governors are at the forefront of both the Covid-19 pandemic and the climate crisis, has been discussed under three main headings: "People," "Planet," and "Prosperity." There are very ambitious and concrete goals under the planet heading. These include the construction of new net-zero-carbon buildings by 2030, the production of 100% zero-emission vehicles as soon as 2035, and the renewal of all buildings to net-zero carbon by 2050. There is a sub-title of "transforming food systems" in the text, with the effect of the summit being held in Milan together with Rome and the influence of Milan, which attaches

importance to food safety and establishes an international network on this issue. In this subtitle, statements referring to SDGs (No. 2, No. 6 and No. 12) have been identified.

3.5.5. Communique of the Year 2022

The 2022 U20 Summit was held in Jakarta, Indonesia. Communique of the year 2022 is eight pages (U20, 2022). It was signed by 28 member cities and 16 observer cities. The biggest difference of the 2022 statement from previous years is that it was published during the Russia-Ukraine War. For this reason, a clear and written call to stop the Russia-Ukraine War without delay is made at the beginning. It has been stated that the U20 should give importance to city diplomacy in order to strengthen the culture of peace in times of turbulence. In line with previous reports, it has also been stated that the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate and energy crises, increasing global inequality and disruptive technology have caused problems for cities, and especially for the global south. Emphasis has also been put on the joint work of both cities and national governments to advance both the rapid implementation of the Paris Climate Charter and the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals. The objectives in the paper have been examined under three main headings. These are: “Investing in health and housing as a cornerstone to an economic and social recovery for all,” “Fostering a sustainable energy transition and equal access to sustainable mobility,” and “Providing education and training on the future of work to give all people equitable access to the job market” (U20, 2022).

3.5.6. Assessment

When we look at the number of member cities and observer cities, we can see that there is an increasing interest in the U20. In 2018, 24 signatory cities and 10 cities with observer status reached the number of 28 member cities and 16 observer cities in 2022. It can be stated that G-20 member cities take part in this prestigious city initiative in order to make their voices heard. It has been determined that the U-20 has focused especially on Sustainable Development Goals and climate change. After the 2018 and 2019 summits, 3 special task committees were organized at the 2020 Riyadh Summit within the structure of the U20 and these three committees focus on the areas identified by the U20. These areas are: Circular Carbon-neutral Economy, Inclusive Prosperous Communities and Nature-based Urban Solutions (Pioa ve Bouchet, 2020).

While the SDGs set general targets for UN member states, the U20 plays an important role in the locating of these targets. In this context, the U20 city initiative takes a bottom-up approach within the scope of the implementation of the SDGs. Emphasis is placed on combating global climate change in all communiques. While it was emphasized that a carbon neutral world was aimed until 2050 as the targets in 2018, it was stated in the 2019 statement that climate change was the "the most pressing challenge" of the 21st century. Besides, a gradual process target has been set in the form of a gradual reduction until 2030 and reaching the 'net zero' target by 2050, assuming that climate change reached its highest point in 2020. In the 2020 declaration, these targets were stated as 50% global reduction by 2030 and reaching the carbon neutral target by 2050. In the 2021 declaration, the 'net zero' target until 2040 was stated and the desired final target was pushed 10 years earlier. In the 2022 declaration, there was a return to the reduction of global emissions by 50% by 2030 and the achievement of the 'net-zero' target by 2050. Therefore, it has been determined that there is a 'path dependency' in communiques regarding climate change targets and statements. Among the common issues included in all communiques are the support of “micro, small, medium-sized” enterprises within the scope of SDG number 8, “Decent work and economic growth,” and the support of women and girls in many ways within the scope of SDG number 5, “gender equality,” “Reducing inequalities,”

which is within the scope of SDG number 10, is among other common themes in all communiqués.

4. CONCLUSION

The biggest difference of the 21st century from previous centuries is that the problems are transboundary and global, as in the examples of global warming and the Corona pandemic, and the motivation to act jointly takes priority because no international organization, state or other actors can solve these problems alone. It was concluded that despite the good intentions and the efforts of the UN SDGs for concrete implementation at the level of cities, the implementation was not successful at the desired level. States are the main actors in international relations. In the field of city diplomacy, cities have carried out their activities for many years in the form of low profile and mostly sharing experience, knowledge and best practices by becoming members of established international organizations in accordance with the constitutional and legal regulations of each state. In city diplomacy, it can be stated that international organizations are mostly low-profile or thematic as in the fight against global climate, and they mostly share best practices. Urban diplomacy, unlike interstate diplomacy, is not an inter-sovereign field. In this context, the hierarchical positions of the cities within the state structures to which they are affiliated constitute the boundaries of city diplomacy. Article 2 of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, entitled Constitutional and Legal Basis for Autonomous Local Administrations, states that the principle of autonomous local administrations will be recognized by the constitution and national legislation, if appropriate. In other words, even for the autonomous execution of city diplomacy, there must be legal regulations. For this reason, it can be concluded that city diplomacy does not have a legal sanction power and has a limited effect for large investment projects as it is under the tutelage of the central administration. City diplomacy has a limited effect on international relations. It can also be concluded that increasing the efficiency of city diplomacy depends on the synchronized execution of the central administration.

The expansion of the definition of threat in the 21st century and the globalization of threats beyond the national security paradigms of states have led to the need to create different and creative pursuits and initiatives in the field of city diplomacy. The climate change crisis is not only included in the strategic security documents of states, but also is clearly expressed as a threat/risk in the final declarations of NATO, a military alliance established during the Cold War. After the UN's call to include both perpetrator and victim cities at the forefront of the fight against global climate change, the U20 network, which is mostly a member of the G20, but is also of interest to UCLG and C40 shared its first declaration with the public to convey it to the decision makers of the G20 countries in 2018. U20 meets the leaders of major cities of G20. To be able to give a message to G20 leaders is a great opportunity. In the fight against the global climate change threat and the Covid-19 pandemic, the draining of the entire swamp with the joint effort of everyone can be described with the concept of stag hunt in international relations. New security threats and risks lead humanity to act together, although there will be a need for more coordination and effort to act jointly, the value of the total gain that will not leave anyone behind will be great.

When U20's five-year communiqués are examined, it is determined that it has been "path dependency". The unexpected impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the whole world, the availability of different vaccines and the access of everyone to the vaccine were the dominant themes in 2020 Communiqué. The call to end the war by referring to the Russia-Ukraine War in the 2022 Communiqué made it different from other communiqués. It is also among the results that city diplomacy actors do not have a significant sanction power on their own, based on the U20 taking advice from G20 members rather than running an initiative by itself.

In the fight against climate change, all global/national/local and non-state actors have a huge responsibility. It is concluded that cities represent more than 50 per cent of the population, and there is a correlation between resource use, CO2 emissions and also increase in food supply needs. After seeing the destructive effects of the Covid-19 pandemic first-hand, we should not overlook the subject of climate change, which is expected to cause similar negative effects. The most fundamental lesson that these crises have taught us is that we are all on the same boat, and it is necessary to act together. While the pandemic complicates our lives with new variants, we also struggle with many disasters such as energy crisis, natural disasters, and forest fires to force us a holistic and cooperative approach rather than unilateral and competitive one because of that “we have one world”.

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