



## **Speech of Markus Reiterer, Secretary General of the Alpine Convention during the high-level segment of COP19**

Madam President,  
Your excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Alpine Convention is an intergovernmental body devoted to sustainable development of the Alps. In our region, the impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly obvious. We witness our glaciers receding, we see the loss of permafrost, the change in biodiversity patterns and we experience increasing risks of landslides, mudslides, inundations etc. We all know that we need to adapt, but we also know that adaptation alone will not to the trick.

Awareness of these challenges for mountainous areas is increasing in the last decades. Most recently in his report on Sustainable Mountain Development, the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon emphasized the “significant constraints that remain to attaining sustainable development in mountain regions, exacerbated by climate change and increases in urbanization and migration.”

Meeting the challenges of climate change requires truly joint efforts of all of us – within a region, among regions and among the world at large. The science is clear. The effects are there. What is still lacking is a common response.

In this context, we appreciate the fruitful cooperation with our sister institution, the Carpathian Convention, and stand ready to further strengthen cooperation with other actors, in particular mountainous areas. If we can draw one lesson from the reality on the ground it is that we all need to do more, we need to do it better and we need to do it faster. The faster we make real progress the better it will be for ourselves, for our planet and the generations to come.