

Statement of the head of delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the 25th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

Mr. President, Excellences, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me express my gratitude to the Government of Spain for hosting and the excellent organization of the Climate Conference, and Chilean Presidency for leadership.

Climate change is running and it is running even faster than previously perceived. From small islands to mountainous landlocked countries like Armenia, the humanity witnesses and experiences the impacts of this change: our ecosystems are depleting, floods, wildfires and heatwaves are growing in intensity and frequency, forcing millions to search for new livelihoods and exposing current and future generations to lifelong health threat. In Armenia this year we experienced an unprecedented number of extensive forest fires, while the country has already registered a 1.3-degree Celsius average temperature increase.

The Paris Agreement is a historic turning point in setting out a global framework to fight climate change and transit to low-carbon economies, giving rise to new economic opportunities, creating new jobs and reducing poverty. We should therefore make the most of those rising opportunities by boosting national capacities, developing and implementing innovative solutions and, finally, enhancing channels of cooperation between developed and developing countries.

The Republic of Armenia considers climate cost as not a simple cost but rather a long term, economically efficient, socially fair and environmentally sound investments for the resilient development of all the countries across the globe.

In its long-term development plan and INDC, Armenia prioritizes country-wide reforestation and afforestation measures. This year for the first time our government used a large share of its own resources for preparation of reforestation activities in the country, while next year we are going to plant 10 million trees on the 10th of the 10th month as a starting milestone towards doubling the current forest cover. While increasing the forest cover ambitiously will greatly benefit our country from added value of combating climate change and enhancing sustainable development, it will also largely contribute to global climate action as forestation in Armenia is a lot more cost effective than in developed countries, and hence leveraged additional funding can be directed to this aim at larger scale.

Distinguished delegates,

The Republic of Armenia along with its international partners has developed a debt-for-climate innovative financial swap mechanism which is directed to leverage additional finance into climate action and provides the opportunity for creating platforms for efficient mobilization of climate finance between developed and developing member states.

This innovative instrument is designed to leverage action to raise climate ambition by allowing developed countries to fulfil commitments under the Paris Agreement as well as redirecting bilateral and public debt of developing countries towards timely and efficient implementation of their NDCs.

We believe this mechanism can be successfully scaled and we would be happy to share our experience and knowledge in developing and utilizing it.

Thank you for your attention.