

Statement by H.E. President Vahagn Khachaturyan at the
UN Climate Change (COP27) Plenary Session
Sharm El Sheikh, 7 November 2022

Mr. President, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me express my gratitude to the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt H.E. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and the Government of Egypt for an excellent organization of the Conference.

Mr. President,

Combating climate change is a critical component of the global agenda, which requires a shared commitment of us all.

As a developing country Armenia is deeply committed to integrate in the global processes for combating climate change, not only by declaring an ambitious climate agenda, but also by engaging in to a more sustainable, resilient and low carbon economic system.

Climate change evolves faster than expected. From the most advanced to the least developed, from small islands to mountainous, landlocked countries like Armenia. The entire mankind not only witnesses this change, but is also affected by it. Ecosystems are at risk, water resources are running dry, floods, storms, forest fires, extreme heat and drought become more frequent.

With a vulnerable mountainous ecosystem, Armenia has already faced the negative consequences of climate change. Our country has recorded 1.3 degrees increase of average temperature and 9 percent decrease of precipitation, which makes the country as one of the most vulnerable to climate change in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Mr. President,

We are all well aware of a destructive power of conflicts on environment - its resources and productivity. Impacts of war on ecosystems vary, and depends on the magnitude and duration of a conflict, as well as the types of weapons used. Regretfully, recently Armenia experienced such a challenge. On September 13 this year Azerbaijan initiated an aggression, targeting the sovereign territory of Armenia. Densely populated towns of the eastern and

south-eastern regions of Armenia, including city of Jermuk, a well-known mountain spa town and popular destination for medical tourism, came under heavy fire. The hostilities with the use of a wide range of weaponry, including artillery and combat UAVs against the settlements were accompanied by causing a heavy damage to the unique environmental complex. The shelling of the Kechut water reservoir had a potentially catastrophic human toll and environmental impact.

Mr. President,

Despite the existing challenges and security concerns in Armenia, the climate change agenda continues to remain priority for the Government. Particularly, climate resilience and low-carbon development are recognized as a primary goal, which is based on the sustainable and long-term climate change adaptation strategy, investments in large-scale afforestation, renewable energy and energy-efficient sectors, application of innovative and modern climate technologies, promotion of electric mobility and development of nuclear energy.

Our country is determined to fulfill its commitments under the Paris Agreement. In its NDCs strategy for 2021-2030 Armenia set a new target for mitigating climate change at the level of the economy-wide – 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and doubling the share of renewables in energy production. In this regard, innovative solutions, including the “Debt for climate” initiative, are critical in a world where accumulated state debt deters most developing economies from accessing climate-related funds. We welcome the progress in the Article 6 of the Paris Agreement to establish international rules, the positive, albeit fragile, achievements we had in Glasgow one year ago, and we expect equal and fair participation of developing countries, promoting full transition of the economies of states to sustainable and carbon-neutral development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Climate change is no longer a hypothetical threat. Every year we witness intensification of environmental disasters caused by climate change. However, I am convinced that we are in a position to address this global problem, in order to restore the balance both for our children and the future generations, as well as for our common home – the Earth.

And finally,

Sir David Attenborough, the recipient of the Champions of the Earth Lifetime Achievement Award reminded us of the whales earlier this year, which were on the verge of extinction some 50 years ago. Somehow the humanity managed to find a unified solution to the problem, and today we have more whales in the seas than ever in history.

In conclusion, let me share my conviction, that acting together we are certainly powerful enough to make a change. **Therefore, let's fight** jointly for sustainable development and a new green era, where nature and humanity co-exist in harmony.

Thank you!