

**Speech by Rauf Hajiyev, Deputy Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources
of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

November 10, 2021, Glasgow, United Kingdom

Dear Chairman,

Your Excellency,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I sincerely thank the government of United Kingdom for organizing this important event and for shown hospitality.

The geographical location, complex and unique landscape, combining high mountains, desert plains and coastal zones, makes Azerbaijan's environment and sectors of its economy extremely sensitive to the effects of climate change.

The reduction of limited water resources by 15 percent over the past decades, droughts, an increase in the frequency and intensity of hazardous atmospheric phenomena increase the sensitivity of our country to climate change.

At a time when the world is facing the threat of rising sea levels, the level of the Caspian sea, a unique reservoir in the region, is declining. This negatively affects the biological resources of the Caspian sea and all economic activities there.

Being aware of all the seriousness of the problem, Azerbaijan is actively involved into activities against climate change.

We have chosen the path of green development. The country is implementing measures to expand forest areas, increase the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficient technologies.

Despite the fact that we are an oil and gas country, Azerbaijan has set a goal to increase the share of renewable energy sources in electricity production to 30% by 2030.

At the same time, we continue to expand the network of a modern early warning system to ensure resilience to hazardous hydrometeorological events. We are open to regional cooperation in this area.

In the NDC, we made an ambitious commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions for 35% until 2030. However, the occupation, in the past of 20% of the territory of our country by Armenia over the last 30 years, the problems of 1 million refugees and internally displaced persons, the destruction of flora and fauna, natural resources in the occupied territories have seriously hampered the implementation of the goals to mitigate the impact of climate change.

At a time when the world is fighting the consequences of climate change, joining efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, calling for the protection of the planet's forest cover, the Armenian occupation regime has destroyed a unique ecosystem on 20% of Azerbaijan's territory over the last three decades.

Currently, we have witnessed how tens of thousands of hectares of our forests were cut down and burned down by the occupation regime in the liberated territories.

Today we look to the future. A number of important decisions have been made to revive the liberated territories.

Restoring these areas includes creating a green energy zone, introducing green agriculture, smart cities and villages, and rehabilitating large areas of forests for a collaborative effort to tackle the impact of climate change, both regionally and globally.

We are pleased to announce the country's new goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for 40% by 2050 and create a zero-emission zone in the liberated territories.

Of course, these goals can only be achieved by providing access to modern technologies and the support of the relevant mechanisms of the UNFCCC, as well as international financial institutions.

Dear conference participants!

The only way to achieve a secure and sustainable future and reduce the negative impact of climate change is to consolidate efforts of all countries.

Azerbaijan has already announced accession to a number of international initiatives during COP 26 in support of efforts to reduce the impact of climate change.

Concluding my speech, I wish you good health and success in protecting our planet during this difficult period.

Thank you for the attention.