

WORLD LEADERS SUMMIT – COP 27
(27th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties)

Address by Mr Andrej Plenković
Prime Minister of Croatia

Sharm El-Sheikh, 7-8 November 2022

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, in Glasgow, we promised to do everything **to accelerate our fight against climate change** and its devastating effects.

Meanwhile, the Russian aggression against Ukraine has confirmed that **green transition** is even more important to increase our resilience.

Economic losses due to extreme weather events are alarmingly increasing.

CROATIA'S EFFORTS TOWARDS THE GREEN TRANSITION

Over the last decade, Croatia suffered an average annual loss of 0.5 % of its GDP.

Croatians have truly become aware of the need to mitigate the effects of climate change—**more than 80%** believe that we should act to prevent harmful consequences for people and the environment.

Thanks to new national and European legislation, we have **further accelerated the transition to low-carbon energy**, in which Croatia is already well above the EU average.

Indeed, **two-thirds of our electricity and energy production** come from renewable sources, which also provide one-third of our total final energy consumption.

In order to give a strong impetus to the **solarisation of our roofs**, we have abolished the VAT on solar panels.

Geothermal energy also represents our great potential, from heating to agriculture.

Croatia, along with Slovenia and Italy, is participating in the **North Adriatic Hydrogen Valley project** aimed at producing green hydrogen.

We are also investing significant efforts in the **decarbonisation of the transport sector.**

Over the next decade, we will invest more than 6 billion euros in the modernisation of the railways.

By 2032, we will introduce a **fleet of battery electric trains** to replace diesel trains.

Croatia is an increasingly popular destination, renowned for its unspoiled nature.

We promote **sustainable tourism** and accommodation facilities with local and ecologically certified food production.

Thanks to a targeted campaign in hotels and campsites, we **reduced food waste** by 10% in just one year.

Over the past five years, Croatians have **increased their recycling rate** by a third and **reduced the waste disposal rate** by a quarter.

THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN CROATIA

Ladies and gentlemen,

In Europe, **this summer was the hottest since the first meteorological records.**

Alas, scientists warn that it could also be one of the coldest of all summers to come.

For the first time in history, the **Adriatic Sea had warmed to a record 30 degrees Celsius as early as June.**

An **unprecedented drought** has caused 300 million euros in damage to Croatian agriculture.

In Croatia alone, over 13,000 fires devastated an area more than twice the size of last year.

However, we have extended reforestation to our cities, where we fund urban tree **planting.**

Adapting all sectors to extreme weather condition is key to preventing and minimizing loss and damage.

We support the discussions at this COP, which is taking place on a particularly vulnerable continent, to find adequate solutions to strengthen the **resilience of our communities**.

MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE TOGETHER

Dear colleagues,

To instigate change, we must start with ourselves.

We have **calculated the carbon footprint of the Croatian Government building** in order to reduce it.

As symbolic as that may sound, every step counts to **raise awareness** among our fellow citizens.

A **real transition** also requires **close cooperation between policy makers and scientists**, but also relevant **data, timely models** and a series of concrete **measures** that can be implemented by decision makers at all levels.

Therefore, **Croatia will establish a National Center for Climate and Ecological Transition** as a center of expertise for all stakeholders.

Because nature is our best ally, in each of our actions let's prioritize "nature-based solutions first".

THE GREEN TRANSITION MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since we last met, **the world has changed irrevocably.**

However, the scientific data remains clear and unquestionable.

We are witnessing an **intolerable imbalance in greenhouse gas emissions:** the richest 1 percent are responsible for 15 percent of emissions, twice as much as the poorest half of humanity.

This is unfair and unsustainable.

If we are to win **this battle**, those who emit the most must do much more and act urgently, especially we, in the developed world.

This is not just a matter of moral fairness and solidarity, but it is also a rational necessity.

Nonetheless, **all together—large and small States, rich and less rich countries—we must act according to our capacities**, despite the current geopolitical upheavals and the related food and energy crises.

At a time when oil and gas are **weaponised**, we need to build **partnerships** anchored in shared values, including energy and climate goals, and **pool our resources and infrastructure** to be more **resilient**.

Although we are currently facing **economic headwinds**, we must remain committed more than ever to implementing the **green transition if our countries are to benefit from it**.

We simply cannot allow for today's crises to turn into future disasters.

It is up to all of us, and together, to make sure that this does not happen.

Thank you.