

WORLD LEADERS SUMMIT – COP 28
(28th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties)

Address by Mr Andrej Plenković
Prime Minister of Croatia

Dubai, 1–2 December 2023

Excellences, Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with a sense of **urgency** and a **call to action** that I address you today on **behalf of Croatia**, which has experienced **record flooding**, the most violent and **devastating storm** in its history, repeated **exceptional tides**, and the **hottest year** ever recorded.

Unfortunately, the **alarms of climate change** are **ringing louder** than ever every day, and the **grim reality** is that global warming is **accelerating** rather than **slowing** down.

Greenhouse gas emissions **continue to rise** when it is urgent that they **decrease**.

For the **first time in the history of humankind**, on November 17th, we exceeded the symbolic **threshold of 2°C** of global warming since the beginning of the industrial era.

Not so long ago, this seemed **unthinkable**.

This is a **clear warning** that **we must do much more** to curb climate change.

However, we are doing the **opposite**.

Half of the cumulative CO₂ emissions emitted over the past two centuries **have been emitted over the past three decades**, and they continue to **grow**.

It is now clear that **the initial goal set by the Paris Agreement** to keep global warming **below 1.5°C** is **no longer within our reach**.

Without a radical breakthrough, **the cumulative emissions inevitably leading to a 2°C warming will be reached in two decades**.

This means that we have **very little time left to act**.

Worse yet, **efforts must now be intensified to stay below 2°C**, and the challenge already seems **monumental**.

But this is **nothing compared** to the **consequences** that such warming would cause **if we did not prevent it**.

Scientists are unanimous: it would cause **migrations** on an unprecedented scale, **disrupt** the **political** and **economic stability** of the world, and threaten **biodiversity**, **food security**, and **world peace**.

We must do everything to **avoid** such a **catastrophic scenario**, which requires our **collective action**.

Croatia distinguishes itself within the European Union.

With our **5th rank** for electricity production from **renewable sources** and our **8th rank** for **gross energy consumption** from **renewable** sources, we have demonstrated our commitment to a **sustainable future**.

Our **12th position worldwide** in implementing the **Sustainable Development Goals** reflects our determination to integrate **sustainable growth** into our national priorities.

We have taken significant steps by introducing **environmental management** in public administration and incorporating **eco-friendly criteria** in our green **public procurement**.

Croatia's carbon pricing has already led to a **43% reduction in CO₂ emissions**, and we are extending the emission trading system (ETS) to the **transport and construction sectors**.

As the **18th global tourist destination**, we strongly advocate for **sustainable tourism**.

Innovative legislation is underway, giving more consideration to the interests of local communities and providing them with tools to **mitigate the impact of tourism** on the environment.

Clean energy is the future.

With **substantial geothermal potential**, Croatia is preparing **numerous projects** that will serve as renewable, stable, and independent sources of electricity production.

The DONES project, a joint effort of **Croatia** and **Spain**, explores ways to **harness fusion** – a clean nuclear energy, akin to the power that **fuels the Sun** – **within a few decades**.

Croatia is participating in the **Hydrogen Valley project**, which brings together several countries in the **northern Adriatic region**.

Aimed at enhancing cooperation in research and innovation, this **flagship initiative** aspires to develop a **green hydrogen supply chain**, where **Croatia** aims to play a **significant regional role** in the future.

Even if **Croatia is not a big polluter**, we aspire to **redouble our efforts** because the **future of our children is at stake**.

If **Croatia**, which **recovered from a devastating war** three decades ago, **can now do more than its share**, it would be to the credit of the **largest and richest nations not to do less**.

This is all the more **important** when we **know** that the richest **10%** are **responsible for half of CO₂ emissions**, while the **poorest half of humanity** only generates **8% of emissions**.

More than ever, we must **act without delay** and **in proportion to our impact** on global warming!

Croatia is determined to play its full part!

Thank you.