

**ΠΑΡΕΜΒΑΣΗ ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗΣ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑΣ
ΣΤΗΝ 28^η ΔΙΑΣΚΕΨΗ ΤΩΝ ΜΕΡΩΝ ΣΤΗΝ ΣΥΜΒΑΣΗ ΠΛΑΙΣΙΟ ΤΩΝ ΗΝΩΜΕΝΩΝ
ΕΘΝΩΝ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΚΛΙΜΑΤΙΚΗ ΑΛΛΑΓΗ**

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

I would like first to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for hosting and steering the work of COP28, and indeed for its leadership on climate change.

There is an evident reason why the world's attention is focused on our deliberations here in Dubai. The gravity of the situation regarding climate change calls for global action, for swift and resolute decisions, but also levelling up our ambition for the future of our planet and for the future generations. It is a global challenge that recognizes no borders, and can only be addressed through multilateral cooperation.

Indeed, the latest IPCC report of March 2023 details the magnitude of changes in the climate system caused by anthropogenic emissions that is unprecedented in the history of humanity. Human-caused climate change is increasing both the frequency and the magnitude of extreme weather events in the whole world, devastates our ecosystems and livelihoods, as well as, by consequence our societies and economies. For some parts of the world this is already an existential threat.

Excellencies,

Cyprus, situated at the heart of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, an area that is highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, is experiencing these effects at higher levels than the global averages.

During these last few years, we have witnessed higher frequency and extend of huge wildfires, droughts and floods, as well as prolonged periods of extreme heat-waves.

These phenomena, have destroyed large parts of our forests, as well as unique ecosystems in our region, and have had a devastating impact on livelihoods, demanding urgent national and regional responses.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Deep emission cuts are necessary across countries, and all sectors of activity within our societies.

It is clear that we must act urgently, decisively, and collectively.

One example of a collective, regional action is the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Climate Change Initiative (EMME-CCI), initiated by Cyprus in 2019 in the context of recognizing the need for regional synergies to combat and mitigate the impact of climate change in the EMME region, in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Last year in Sharm El Sheikh the Heads of States and Governments of countries belonging to the initiative¹, adopted a political declaration as well as the Regional Action Plan. Currently, we are in the process of moving forward with its implementation. We initiated a dialogue and stocktaking with the countries that are part of the initiative to jointly undertake and move forward specific projects and actions to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation.

[Furthermore, firmly believing in the necessity for regional and transnational cooperation, the Republic of Cyprus will host in April 2024 the First Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on the Sustainable Use of the Ocean. The meetings aim is to establish the principles, priorities and actions that will govern the future Commonwealth Ocean Declaration].

Dear friends,

Global ambition must also substantially increase in line with the Paris Agreement to keep the 1.5°C objective within reach. With this in mind, we need to successfully conclude the first Global Stocktake, with a determined and forward-looking outcome, crystalizing pathways and opportunities for a climate resilient and sustainable development.

¹ Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the importance of youth, of the generations that will come after us. These voices are speaking up, loud and clear, and expect us to deliver to them a future of hope.

Let us heed that call, let us walk the path to climate neutrality, and let us come together to build resilient, sustainable, and green businesses, communities and countries for the future.

Thank you.
