

National statement by Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia Kaja Kallas at COP28

2 December 2023

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no other collective effort as demanding as solving the climate crisis. I thank our host, United Arab Emirates, who is committed to finding climate solutions.

We have a clear to-do list to keep the 1.5-degree scenario alive. Estonia strongly supports the Presidency's call for a paradigm shift. We need decisiveness to translate words into action.

In Estonia, we already act. We place climate at the centre. Our message is – the economy must fit into environmental boundaries. In Estonia, we embrace the twin transition. With the help of modern technology, we align our society, economy, and mindset with a sustainable future.

It is necessary to cut emissions and boost renewable energy at the same time. We must triple renewable energy globally by 2030 – and improve energy efficiency while phasing out fossil fuels. I encourage every country to join the pledge. We need both an ambitious negotiation outcome as well as pledges to strengthen national targets. Early signals are promising.

We cannot afford to be distracted by the geopolitical scheming of those who use ecocide as a tool of warfare. Earlier this year, Russia destroyed the Kakhovka dam in Ukraine, with no regard for the catastrophic environmental consequences and also endangering the nearby nuclear power plant.

Russia's full-scale aggression has a global impact, including to food security. Vast areas of arable land need to be rid of mines and pollution caused by Russia. It's vital we join our efforts not only to reduce the global impact of ecocide but to help Ukrainians to stop the aggressor and rebuild their country sustainably.

Responsible countries come together for our common future. And Estonia wishes to lead by inspiration. Today, digital is enabling our green reform. Estonia's parliament has adopted a new renewable electricity target of 100 per cent by 2030, more than tripling our level of renewables production. We plan to reduce emissions by 80% already by 2035, compared to 1990 levels. It's a bold ambition, since until very recently our energy production was dominated by fossil fuels.

Bold ambition is necessary, especially now as we take stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement for the first time. On climate finance, I am pleased to announce Estonia's contribution of 1,1 million euros – we pledge 1 million to the Green Climate Fund, and equal contributions of 50 000 to the UNFCCC Trust Fund for Supplementary Activities and to the new Loss and Damage fund.

Small countries contribute to solving the climate crisis. This year, our public, private and third sector solutions are on display in our first ever national pavilion.

I have not yet spoken about our greatest treasure – young people. The new generation takes climate justice issues into their hearts and hands. We must believe in them.

In the face of climate change, people must be empowered, knowledge and tools need to be shared. You say climate crisis, we say let's act.