

Dear President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the people of Georgia and our COP26 Delegation, it is a great privilege for me to address this historic gathering.

Allow me to express my sincere appreciation to the United Kingdom for its dedication to bring us together and make the COP26 a reality in light of the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Excellencies, we all know that our living environment is changing. **[PAGE 1]**

The Caucasus – a beautiful land of mountains, glaciers, and rivers -- has already lost 40 percent of its glaciers. During the last two decades alone, the speed of glacier loss in the eastern Georgia has exceeded projections from the end of the twentieth century.

We fully share the alarm presented by UN Secretary-General's latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that declared a “code red for humanity.”

The report makes crystal clear that the combined commitments of each nation in the Nationally Determined Contributions are insufficient to reduce atmospheric greenhouse gases below dangerous levels, and that greater ambition and effort is needed if we are to meet the long-term temperature goals of the Paris Agreement and avert a global disaster. **[PAGE 2]**

The challenges are clear, but so are the solutions.

We must rise to these challenges and increase our commitment to developing more productive, stable and resilient societies. The investments in clean energy, climate-smart agriculture, and enhanced adaptive capacity represent concrete steps for reducing emissions and preparing our societies for the unavoidable impacts of climate change. We must embrace the Secretary General's key proposals to "protect our planet" reflected in Our Common Agenda. **[PAGE 3]**

In that spirit, Georgia has committed by 2030 to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by more than half compared to its 1990 levels, and to deepen the understanding of its adaptive capacity to climate change through international partnerships. The Government of Georgia has a development plan with a clear vision for 2030 that aligns perfectly with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

For its part, Georgia will achieve this by diversifying its renewable energy sector; expanding the share of wind and solar segments in its energy market; transforming the country's urban mobility; developing low-carbon approaches in the construction, industrial, and waste sectors; advancing climate-smart technologies and services; and increasing the carbon-capturing capacity of Georgia's magnificent forests. [PAGE 4]

Of course, we are here because none of us can meet these challenges alone.

Leaders from government, industry, academia, subject-matter professionals, technical experts and stakeholders in every community from every country and from every region must act jointly to solve the climate crisis by building a low-carbon and resilient economies. From small towns and villages to large urban areas, we must all pledge to the younger population today and for future generations, that preserving our planet is non-negotiable. We must act.

Lastly, let me mention that the COP26 has critical importance for our national and regional interest.

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Equitable geographical representation, the sovereign equality and dignity of all states are fundamental bedrock principles of the United Nations.

Georgia wishes to realize the widest possible cooperation under the Convention as it is noted in its preamble in response to this uniquely global challenge. Georgia wishes to thank the Presidency and all Parties for their spirit of compassion and their willingness to move forward on agenda related proposals, including the need to address equitable geographical representation.

Georgia looks forward to working with the Presidency and our partners to address these issues in a collaborative, transparent, and equitable manner.

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No one should be left behind in this fight!

Georgia looks forward to bold and visionary outcomes from COP26 that will dramatically advance our collective climate ambition and help us build back from the pandemic -- greener, stronger, and more secure than ever. The next generation are counting on us to deliver on our promise.

Thank you!

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