

COP29 National Statement for Israel by Ambassador Gideon Behar, Special Envoy for Climate Change and Sustainability

Mr. President

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the beginning of my statement, I would like to express our most sincere appreciation and gratitude for the government and people of Azerbaijan for hosting us all for this conference.

As we speak, climate negotiations are underway. It's true that many of these talks have led to frustration. Key issues remain unresolved, and it often feels like we're taking two steps forward and one step back. But let's not lose the bigger picture.

The science is clearer than ever: human activity is driving the climate crisis, and this is the critical decade to act. Every country must enhance its climate plans—its NDCs. We all know the direction: reducing emissions, investing in clean energy, and embracing the technologies of the future.

This COP must build on the achievements and progress already made in previous COPs and show tangible and clear results on the main issues at hand: mitigation, adaptation, climate finance, Article 6, gender and more. This is the only way to reach real transformation and make the necessary progress towards saving our planet.

For Israel, this transformation is not just an option—it's a necessity. Despite one of the darkest years in our history—an ongoing war of survival following the brutal attacks of Hamas on October 7th, 2023, the continuous bombardments of Israeli towns by the Hizballah terrorist organization, and the suffering of our 101 hostages in tunnels in Gaza—we have not lost vision of the future. Israel is committed to the global effort to combat climate change. We have introduced a carbon tax, and our new climate law is advancing through Parliament.

Israel has brought to Baku 20 cutting-edge climate-tech companies, that represent Israel's thriving climate innovation for clean energy, sustainable agriculture, food security, and water technologies - solutions that have the potential to benefit our region and the entire world.

For Israel, we have no choice but to focus on the future. The choices we all make today are about building a future for generations to come.

We must act together with urgency, with hope, and with the solid belief that we are building something far greater than the challenges we face.

Thank you.