

The Republic of Korea's National Statement at COP30

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

and colleagues taking climate action together with us,

Allow me to express my deep appreciation to the Brazilian Presidency and the UNFCCC Secretariat for their outstanding leadership in successfully hosting COP30.

Ten years ago in Paris, the world united to strengthen our collective response to the threat of climate change.

That same year, 2015, was when atmospheric CO₂ levels measured at the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii exceeded 400 ppm for the first time in human history.

Last year, the global temperature rise already surpassed 1.5 degrees Celcius. The 1.5-degree goal is at risk and the Earth can no longer wait.

The window of opportunity to act is rapidly closing.

In this critical moment, the Republic of Korea launched the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment in October.

This new Ministry brings together Korea's energy policy, that covers 70 percent of national greenhouse gas emissions, and our overarching climate policy.

By doing so, it will accelerate greenhouse gas reductions and play a leading role in advancing a decarbonized, green transition.

Under this significant environmental mandate, we will also strive to shape a future where people, communities, and nature coexist harmoniously.

Today, I am honored to present the Republic of Korea's 2035 NDC, the first major task for the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment.

Korea will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 53 to 61 percent from 2018 levels by 2035.

Over the past decade since the Paris Agreement, the international community has worked tirelessly to limit the projected global temperature rise by around 1.5 degrees Celcius by the end of this century.

Yet, we remain far from achieving the Paris Agreement's goal.

Korea's ambitious 2035 NDC reflects our commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050, as pledged to the world, and to further pursuing a reduction pathway aligned with the 1.5-degree goal.

We have already demonstrated our ability to rise from the ravages of war and grow into a key player in the global manufacturing supply chain.

We have also inspired the world with K-culture, which encompasses music, drama, fashion and beauty, and with K-democracy, secured by citizens in the face of crises over the time.

Now, Korea is embarking on a new journey toward the K-Green Transformation.

We will leverage innovative manufacturing, competitive AI technology, and a governance system that encourages public participation in spite of challenges such as our energy-intensive industrial structure and limited territory.

Through this effort, we aim to take the lead in promoting global green transition.

Korea will build a robust energy system powered by solar and wind to meet the soaring electricity demand from AI and data centers.

The benefits from this transition will be shared with local communities.

We will also develop a people-centered sustainable development strategy through a whole-of-government approach, ensuring the safety and prosperity of our citizens by harnessing AI-powered, carbon-neutral technologies.

We look forward to sharing our vision and plans through the UNFCCC Climate Week in Asia, which Korea has submitted a bid to host in May 2026.

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Our shared task in this era is to transform the fossil fuel-based civilization, which has powered human prosperity for the past 250 years since the Industrial Revolution, into a decarbonized, green civilization.

At times, we may feel overwhelmed by the scale of this monumental task and be tempted to maintain the status quo.

Yet, Belém — the gateway to the Amazon — shows us that the path forward remains the same, just as the Amazon river may flow slowly or meander but ultimately finds its way to the ocean.

In the spirit of Global Mutirão, the world must move forward together, united in our pursuit of a decarbonized, green civilization.

Climate action is a global responsibility and a shared mission of humankind, bound by one common destiny.

As a responsible middle power, the Republic of Korea will faithfully implement its ambitious NDC and continue to work closely with the global community to lead the way toward a decarbonized, green civilization.

Thank you.